

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

AGENCY: The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), HHS.

ACTION: Announcement of the availability of funds and request for applications for a cooperative agreement(s) to establish a National Center for Marriage Research.

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**SUMMARY:** In the past decades, the U.S. has undergone massive shifts in patterns of marriage and childbearing. The U.S. continues to experience social changes relating to family structure, demographics, income, and the social and behavioral functioning of individuals and families. The role and strategies of government and other organizations in addressing these issues is also adapting and evolving. In order to successfully promote the health and welfare of the American people, HHS needs to have timely access to high-quality, relevant research on marriage, including analyses of the causes and consequences of changes in marriage and childbearing patterns over the past decades; the impact of marriage and family structure on the health and well-being of individuals, families, children and communities; and the policy and program interventions designed to support development of healthy marriages. To further these efforts and inform the public, HHS is soliciting applications from university-based institutions for a cooperative agreement. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) expects to fund the National Center for Marriage Research for a period of five (5) years. The first year of funding for a National Center for Marriage Research will be approximately \$900,000 (combined direct and indirect funding). Subject to the availability of future funds we expect to fund a second year at \$900,000; a third year at \$900,000; a fourth year at \$850,000 and a fifth and final year at \$800,000 for total federal funding of \$4.35 million over the five year period for the Center with increasing matching requirements from non-federal sources over the term of the agreement. No federal funding is anticipated beyond the fifth year.

ASPE plans to fund one National Center for Marriage Research. The National Center for Marriage Research cooperative agreement is for qualified institutions to provide a focused agenda expanding our understanding of the effect of marriage and family structure, particularly for the well-being of children and their communities. It is anticipated that investigators supported under the National Center for Marriage Research will benefit from the opportunity to conduct independent research; that the grantee institution will benefit from participation in the diverse extramural programs of HHS; and that students will benefit from exposure to and participation in research and be encouraged to pursue graduate studies and careers in the social and behavioral sciences with a focus on marriage.

**CLOSING DATE:** The closing date for submitting applications under this announcement is **AUGUST 2, 2007**. Please email Dr. Donald T. Oellerich at [Don.Oellerich@hhs.gov](mailto:Don.Oellerich@hhs.gov) by JULY 15, 2007 to inform the government of your intent to submit an application. Include the name of

your organization. Providing notice of intent to submit is not a requirement for submitting an application. However, a notice of intent to submit will help the federal government in the planning for the review process.

ADDRESSES: Electronic applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) will be servicing these cooperative agreements for ASPE. Mailed applications should be submitted to Dr. Don Oellerich, Deputy to the Chief Economist and Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 405F, Washington, DC 20201. You will receive email confirmation to notify you that your application was received within 5 days of the closing date. If you do not receive confirmation within 5 days of the closing date, please contact Dr. Oellerich at the address provided above or e-mail him at [don.oellerich@hhs.gov](mailto:don.oellerich@hhs.gov). Electronic applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and will not be accepted if they are e-mailed to Dr. Oellerich.

The posted notice through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) is the only official program announcement. Any corrections to this announcement will be published on the ASPE website at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/funding.htm> and the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website. The applicant bears sole responsibility to assure that the copy downloaded and/or printed from any other source is up-to-date, accurate and complete.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Administrative questions should be directed to Roberta Dunlap Wolcott , National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 6700B Rockledge Drive, Room 2244, MSC 7614, Bethesda, MD 20892-7614, phone: (301) 451-2685, fax: (301) 493-0597, [WolcottR@niaid.nih.gov](mailto:WolcottR@niaid.nih.gov). Requests for forms and questions (administrative and technical) will be accepted and responded to up to 10 days prior to closing date of receipt of applications. Technical questions should be directed to Dr. Don Oellerich, DHHS, Deputy to the Chief Economist and Senior Advisor, Telephone: (202) 690-8410 or Jennifer Burnszynski, DHHS, Social Science Analyst, Telephone: (202) 690-8651. Questions also may be faxed to either Dr. Oellerich or Ms. Burnszynski at (202) 690- 6562. Written technical questions should be addressed to Dr. Oellerich at the Department of Health and Human Services, ASPE/HSP, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 405F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, DC 20201. (Application submissions may not be faxed.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This program announcement consists of four parts: Part I: Background—Legislative authority, Eligible Applicants, Project Purpose, Available Funds in 2007, Matching Requirements, and Project and Budget Period; Part II: Awardee Responsibilities for the National Center on Marriage Research, ASPE Responsibilities, Joint Responsibilities, Arbitration Procedures, Rights to Data; Part III: The Review Process-- Intergovernmental Review, Initial Screening, Competitive Review and Evaluation Criteria; Part IV: The Application--General Information, Application Development, Application Submission, Disposition of Applications, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number, and Components of a Complete Application.

## Part I. Background

### A. Legislative Authority

This cooperative agreement is authorized by Section 1110 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1310) and awards will be made from funds appropriated under Public Law No. 110-05.

### B. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for National Center for Marriage Research are restricted to colleges, universities and other post-secondary degree granting entities. (For-profit entities are advised that no cooperative agreement funds may be paid as profit to any recipient of a grant or subgrant. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs of the grantee.)

### **D-U-N-S Requirement**

All applicants must have a D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published in the *Federal Register* a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires Federal grant applicants to provide a D-U-N-S number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The D-U-N-S number is required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal, [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). A D-U-N-S number is required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a D-U-N-S number. You may acquire a D-U-N-S number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free D-U-N-S number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

### C. Project Purpose

Marriage and family structure are intertwined with all aspects of life—health, economic security, child and adult well-being, and others—so an accurate, rigorous understanding of the role of family structure is essential to inform policy research across the health and human services domains. Marriage is associated with improved child and adult well-being in areas ranging from economics to physical and mental health. There is also evidence that community well-being is affected by having higher proportions of resident married families. The economic consequences of divorce and non-marital child-bearing clearly have economic consequences for society as well. As research has emerged highlighting the important role that marriage and family structure play in building a strong and healthy society, policy interest in these issues has grown immensely. A variety of policy and programmatic interventions are being tested throughout the

country, from the state level down to neighborhoods. However, we still know very little about how and why marriage seems to bring such benefits, how this may vary by socioeconomic status or racial/ethnic group, and if government and others organizations can affect marital and childbearing trends.

ASPE will fund the National Center for Marriage Research to move the field forward in a strongly research-driven manner and fill important gaps in our understanding of marriage and family structure. The National Center for Marriage Research will play a leadership role in building the research base regarding the causes and consequences of changes in family structure and childbearing patterns over the past decades; the impact of marriage and family structure on the health and well-being of individuals, families, children and communities; and the policy and program interventions designed to support development of healthy marriages. In addition to conducting and disseminating high-quality, policy-relevant research, building research capacity and networks—supporting faculty research and faculty training; enhancing campus-wide awareness of issues related to marriage and family structure; and supporting and mentoring students in careers related to marriage and family research and policy is a central purpose of the National Center for Marriage Research.

The goals of the National Center for Marriage Research are to 1) improve our understanding of both the effects of marriage on the health and well-being of children, adults, families and communities; and the effects of programmatic interventions; 2) provide a core of multi-disciplinary researchers, as well as a network of scholars who focus their research on marriage and family structure, 3) develop and train future social science researchers whose work focuses on marriage and family structure, 4) improve research methods and data to permit a fuller understanding of the effects of family structure in various domains across the life span; and 5) establish and maintain a network for the active dissemination of findings to the policy and research communities as well as program practitioners through newsletters, working papers, special reports, conferences, and briefings. This fifth priority must be closely coordinated with and through the Healthy Marriage Resource Center funded by the HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The Healthy Marriage Resource Center website is [www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org).

ASPE expects the center funded under this announcement to provide leadership through innovative basic and applied research, policy evaluation, and mentoring to increase the number and diversity of marriage scholars and heighten awareness of marriage-related issues for all students by bringing relevant content into the classroom. The winning applicant will be expected to pioneer a program that initiates a strong scholarly tradition and informed concern for the role marriage and family structure plays in the health and welfare of adults and children.

The National Center for Marriage Research builds upon a successful model developed and refined to study poverty and improve poverty research—the National Poverty Research Center. The National Poverty Research Center conducts a broad program of basic and applied research and mentoring of emerging scholars to describe and analyze environments and policies affecting

low income people, particularly those families with children who are poor or at risk of being poor. The National Poverty Center is currently at the University of Michigan (<http://www.npc.umich.edu/>).

#### D. Available Funds in 2007

The Assistant Secretary has available a total of \$900,000 for the first year of award for the National Center for Marriage Research. ASPE anticipates providing one award. Nothing in this announcement restricts the ability of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation to make no awards, multiple awards or to make a lesser or greater award(s).

#### E. Matching Requirements

The awardee must provide at least 10 percent of the total approved cost of the project from non-federal sources (e.g., host institution, foundations, state government) for the first year. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the federal share (direct and indirect) and the non-federal share (direct and indirect). The non-federal share may be met by cash and/or in-kind contributions. For example, an awardee with a project with a total budget (both direct and indirect costs) of \$1,000,000 may request up to \$900,000 in federal funds. Nonfederal matching requirements for the second and third years of the award are 10 percent each year as well. Nonfederal matching requirements for the fourth and fifth year of the award increase to 15 percent and 20 percent, respectively. Matching requirements cannot be met with funds from other federally-funded programs. If a proposed project activity has approved funding support from other funding sources, the amount, duration, purpose, and source of the funds should be indicated in materials submitted under this announcement. If completion of the proposed project activity is contingent upon approval of funding from other sources, the relationship between the funds being sought elsewhere and from ASPE should be discussed in the budget information submitted as a part of the budget narrative. In both cases, the contribution that ASPE funds will make to the Center and the corresponding match should be clearly presented.

#### F. Project and Budget Period

ASPE expects to fund the National Center for Marriage Research for a period of five (5) years. The first year of federal funding for the Marriage Research Center will be \$900,000 (combined federal direct and indirect funding). Subject to the availability of future funds we expect to fund a second and third year at \$900,000 each year; a fourth year at \$850,000 and a fifth and final year at \$800,000 for total federal funding of \$4.35 million over the five year period. While no federal funding is anticipated beyond the fifth year the awardee will be encouraged to continue the work of the National Center for Marriage Research with non-federal support generated from the host institution, other institutions, foundations, state government or other private sources.

Applications are to include separate budget estimates for each of the five years. Legislative support for continued funding of the Center during the five year grant period cannot be

guaranteed and future year funding is subject to future appropriations and approval of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. ASPE expects, however, that the Center will be supported during future fiscal years of the award period at an annual level of effort consistent with the announced level. The award pursuant to this announcement will be made on or about September 15, 2007.

## Part II--Responsibilities of the Awardee and the Federal Government in the Establishment and Operation of a National Center for Marriage Research

### A. Awardee Responsibilities for the National Center for Marriage Research

The purpose of the National Center for Marriage Research is to support interdisciplinary research leading to an improved understanding of how marriage and family structure affect the health and well-being of individuals, families, children and communities and to inform the policy and programmatic response. Central to the mission of the National Center for Marriage Research is capacity building - supporting faculty research and faculty training; enhancing campus-wide awareness of issues related to marriage; and supporting and mentoring students in marriage research. The National Center for Marriage Research is expected to create and nurture an environment conducive to inter-disciplinary collaborations among social and behavioral scientists and affected communities with the goal of improving our understanding of marriage, including the causes and consequences of changes in marriage and childbearing patterns over the past decades; the impact of marriage and family structure on the health and well-being of individuals, families, children and communities; and the policy and program interventions designed to support development of healthy marriages. The successful applicant shall develop and conduct a program which appropriately balances core infrastructure, research, mentoring emerging scholars, and dissemination activities directed to understanding the impact of marriage on the health and well-being of individuals, families, children, and communities.

The awardee will have the primary and lead responsibility to define objectives and approaches, and to plan research, conduct studies, analyze data, and publish results, interpretations, and conclusions of its work. The awardee will be permitted to undertake responsibilities as required by other sponsors as long as they do not interfere or contradict the purposes of the agreement with ASPE. Occasionally, Center staff will be expected to comment on research plans, provide critical commentary on research products, perform statistical policy analyses, and participate in other quick-response activities to support ASPE's research, evaluation, and policy analysis functions. (Without compromising academic freedom, Center staff will be expected to comply with special requests when the Administration requires confidentiality.) HHS will not interfere with nor infringe upon the academic freedom associated with the university setting.

To assure the quality of its research, dissemination, and mentoring program, and to assure a careful examination of the output of the Center within the academic community, the Center must establish and maintain a formal tie with a university, including links with all appropriate departments within that university. The Center must have a major presence at a single site

(university or city); however, innovative arrangements among universities and with individual scholars at other universities also may be proposed.

The Center shall take a broad, comprehensive approach to analyzing marriage as a rich interdisciplinary topic across the human lifespan. ASPE has identified the kinds of issues we are interested in exploring through the National Center for Marriage Research. Applications do not have to address all these ASPE interests; they may identify and address other important aspects of marriage instead of or in addition to any or all of the issues mentioned below. However, applicants should present plans to address a broad mix of issues and should not focus narrowly on only one or two aspects.

Examples of issue areas that are of particular interest to ASPE include:

1. the effects of marriage and family structure on health and health care outcomes, including how marriage, marital transitions, and marital quality may affect physical and mental health status, health care utilization and costs, health insurance status, healthy behaviors, and children's health;
2. the interaction between marriage and economic self-sufficiency, workforce strength, and the economy;
3. family formation and healthy marriages;
4. nonmarital child-bearing and teen pregnancy;
5. transition of youth to healthy adult relationships and marriages;
6. healthy marriage, effective parenting, and child well-being;
7. the role of religiosity and non-governmental organizations (including faith based organizations) in maintaining and improving the well-being of families and children as it relates to marriage and family structure;
8. marriage and family formation strengths and challenges for American subpopulations (e.g. Latino, African American, Native American, immigrants) as well as variation by socioeconomic status, region, and urban/rural residence; and
9. marriage, family structure, and aging.

While the activities of the National Center for Marriage Research are intended to inform program evaluations and coordinate with evaluators in the marriage and family fields and will also likely analyze marriage and family policies, specific program evaluation is not a required function of the Center. .

The awardee will coordinate with the DHHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) - Healthy Marriage Resource Center in all areas but particularly in dissemination of research findings to ensure, to the extent possible, the optimal use of resources and expertise. Applicants need not include a letter of intent from the Healthy Marriage Resource Center with their application. No funds from this cooperative agreement should go to support the Healthy Marriage Resource Center, but funds should be budgeted for coordination with the Healthy Marriage Resource Center.

The awardee will perform the following specific tasks:

#### 1. Research Program

The National Center for Marriage Research will be expected to plan, initiate and maintain a research program of high caliber. It may include small-scale, new or ongoing social, behavioral, policy- related research projects, including pilot research projects and feasibility studies; development, testing, and refinement of research techniques; secondary analysis of available data sets; or similar research projects.

It must meet the tests of social science rigor and objectivity. The program will strive for respect from the academic and policy communities (over a broad range of the political spectrum) for its scientific quality, fairness, and policy relevance. This program should include an appropriately balanced agenda of basic and applied, quantitative and qualitative field work, and primary and secondary analyses. The research program should include supporting the work of members of the Center staff and other affiliated researchers. In addition, it should provide intellectual leadership in the national research community by establishing links with a broad range of other scholars, through visiting and postdoctoral appointments, research assistantships, and an extramural program of nonresident grants. The Center must demonstrate clear plans to recruit and support outside marriage researchers from other institutions. In addition, the awardee must commit to working cooperatively with the Healthy Marriage Resource Center being funded by the DHHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

The research program should include broad-based, multi-disciplinary and multi-method approaches to increasing the understanding of the issues beyond what is possible from analysis within the framework of a single discipline or method. At a minimum, the proposed staff should possess competency in quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a range of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, public policy/administration, demography, human development including child development, public health, and other related social and behavioral disciplines. It also is appropriate to engage in activities to make advances in research techniques, where they are needed for or related to primary objectives of the Center. Planning and execution of the research program shall always consider the policy implications of research findings in a non-partisan manner. The Center should link research to public and private efforts to improve the lives of individuals and families. The research and its dissemination shall be of value to all levels



of policy making—federal, state, and local government—as well as the general research and programmatic communities. A National Advisory Committee (discussed below) shall periodically review the research agenda to assure its policy relevance, utility, and scope.

## 2. Mentoring Young Scholars

The National Center for Marriage Research is expected to develop and expand a diverse corps of emerging scholars/researchers who focus career goals on policy, research and programs focused on marriage. The Center will be expected to financially support the work of graduate research assistants, PhD candidates, postdoctoral scholars, and other research scholars, and to consider a long term strategy to reach out to those emerging scholars affiliated with institutions that do not have the capacity to mentor students as marriage researchers. The National Center for Marriage Research will be expected to develop an awareness and interest in students of the opportunities in marriage research through such activities as research internships, seminars and related experiences. Applicants should demonstrate how students will benefit from exposure to and participation in the ongoing research of the National Center for Marriage Research faculty and staff and be encouraged to pursue graduate studies and careers in the social and behavioral sciences with a focus on marriage-related studies.

## 3. Dissemination

Making knowledge and information available to interested parties is to be another integral feature of the National Center for Marriage Research's responsibilities. The Center will be expected to develop and maintain a systematic dissemination plan. Applicants are encouraged to propose use of innovative methods of disseminating data and information. Applications should show sensitivity to the different dissemination strategies which may be appropriate for different audiences--such as policy makers, practitioners, and academics. Coordination of the National Center for Marriage Research dissemination strategy with ACF's Healthy Marriage Resource Center is essential to provide for effective communication and the optimal use of resources and expertise.

### B. ASPE Responsibilities

ASPE will be involved with the Center in jointly establishing broad research priorities and planning strategies to accomplish the objectives of this announcement. ASPE, or its representatives, will provide the following types of support to the Center: (1) consultation and technical assistance in planning, operating, and evaluating the Center's program of research, mentoring and dissemination activities, (2) information about HHS programs, policies, and research priorities, (3) assistance in collaborating with appropriate federal, state and local governmental officials in the performance of Center activities, (4) assistance in identifying HHS information and technical assistance resources pertinent to the Center's success, (5) assistance in the transfer of information to appropriate federal, state, and local entities, (6) review of Center

activities and feedback to ensure that objectives and award conditions are being met, and (7) coordination of activities amongst the National Center for Marriage Research and ACF's Healthy Marriage Resource Center to ensure, to the extent possible, the optimal use of resources and expertise. ASPE retains the right to withhold annual renewals to the awardee, if technical performance requirements are not met.

### C. Joint Responsibilities

The awardee, jointly with ASPE, will appoint an outside National Advisory Committee, funded under this agreement. The Committee will be selected to provide assistance to the National Center for Marriage Research, formulating the research agenda and advice on carrying it out. Efforts will be made in selecting this committee to assure a broad range of academic disciplines. The Committee will be composed of approximately six to eight nationally recognized scholars and practitioners. This Committee will meet once a year rotating between Washington, DC and the National Center for Marriage Research's location.

### D. Arbitration Procedures

Both ASPE and the National Center for Marriage Research are expected to work in a collegial fashion to minimize misunderstandings and disagreements. They should explore every alternative to prevent impasses, including consultation with the advisory committee established under section C, but if agreement between the awardee and ASPE staff cannot be reached on significant programmatic or scientific-technical issues that might arise after the award, an arbitration panel shall be formed. The panel will consist of one person appointed by the awardee, one person appointed by ASPE, and a third person appointed by these two members. The decision of the arbitration panel, by majority vote will be binding. These special arbitration procedures in no way affect the awardee's right to appeal an adverse action in accordance with HHS regulations at 45 CFR part 16.

### E. Rights to Data

The awardee will retain custody of and have primary rights to any data developed under this award, subject to government rights to access consistent with current HHS regulations. The awardee should make reasonable efforts, however, to provide other researchers appropriate and speedy access to research data from this project and establish public use files of research data developed under this award.

## Part III. The Review Process

### A. Intergovernmental Review

State Single Point of Contact (Executive Order 12372). The Department of Health and Human Services has determined that this program is not subject to Executive Order No. 12372,

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, because it is a program that is national in scope and the only impact on state and local governments would be through subgrants. Applicants are not required to seek intergovernmental review of their applications within the constraints of Executive Order 12372.

## B. Initial Screening

Each application submitted under this program announcement will undergo a pre-review to determine that (1) the application was received by the closing date and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this announcement, (2) the applicant is eligible for funding (see Part I, Section B), (3) the application meets the matching requirements (see Part I, Section E) and (4) is within the page limit (see Part IV, Section A). Note that applications that do not meet all four of the pre-review items (1 - 4) will not be reviewed further and will be ineligible for funding.

## C. Competitive Review and Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the National Center for Marriage Research that pass the initial screening will be evaluated and rated by an independent, expert review panel. The panel will use the evaluation criteria listed below to score each application. The evaluation criteria are designed to assess the quality of the proposed project and to determine the likelihood of its success. The evaluation criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Points are awarded only to applications that are responsive to the evaluation criteria within the context of this program announcement. These review results will be the primary element used by ASPE in making funding decisions. HHS reserves the option to discuss applications with other federal or state staff, specialists, experts, and the general public. Comments from these sources, along with those of the reviewers, will be kept from inappropriate disclosure and may be considered in making an award decision. Selection of the successful applicant will be based on the technical and financial criteria laid out in this announcement. Reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application in terms of the evaluation criteria listed below, provide comments and assign numerical scores--out of a possible 100 points. A summary of all applicant scores and strengths/weaknesses and recommendations will be prepared and submitted to the ASPE for decisions. The point value following each criterion heading indicates the maximum numerical relative weight that each section will be given in the review process. An unacceptable rating on any individual criterion may render the entire application unacceptable. Consequently, applicants should take care to ensure that all criteria are fully addressed in the applications. Applications will be reviewed using the following evaluation criteria. Please be sure to refer to Part IV, section B, Application Development.

### Evaluation Criteria

#### (1) Approach and Research Plan (30 points)

The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the significant trends and past related research (see section on application development) especially as it relates to the priority areas identified by the applicant. The applicant demonstrates a grasp of the significance of these past trends and research. The research agenda is consistent with the trends and research analysis and builds on what is known to address important unknowns. The research planning approach demonstrates a commitment to bring a broad-based multi-disciplinary approach to understanding marriage and marriage-related issues across the lifespan. Applicants presenting a multidisciplinary approach will be judged more favorably. The applicant proposes a research agenda that is scientifically sound and policy relevant. The applicant demonstrates that the research activities are likely to make significant contributions to understanding marriage and related outcomes for children, adults, families, and communities, as well as what governments can do and cannot do to make the lives of adults, children and families stronger, healthier, more secure, and open to opportunity. The applicant's approach demonstrates that it extends beyond and builds upon existing marriage research. The discussion and proposed research activities address the major themes of this announcement and/or those identified by the applicant. The applicant includes concise plans for research activities in the first year as well as a five-year agenda. The applicant demonstrates plans to conduct policy-relevant activities and interact with various levels of government to research, analyze and evaluate significant government initiatives and policies in a nonpartisan manner.

## (2) Training and Mentoring Emerging Scholars (20 points)

The applicant demonstrates clear efforts to develop and expand a diverse corps of emerging scholars and researchers. The applicant demonstrates efforts to mentor and support students, research assistants, Ph.D. candidates, postdoctoral students, and other research scholars. The applicant demonstrates plans to integrate the training of research scholars and expose them to policy research activities at ASPE. The applicant demonstrates methods to ensure diversity. The mentoring plan demonstrates an adequate level at which investigators have direct contact with and/or engage with students. The applicant demonstrates efforts to expose and engage students in marriage-related research and encourage the pursuit of advanced studies and/or careers in public policy and programs which address the causes, correlates and consequences of marriage. The applicant demonstrates plans to reach marriage scholars at other institutions.

## (3) Dissemination (10 points)

The applicant's approach to dissemination and modes of communicating with a broad audience of academics, policymakers, and practitioners - including, for example, convening conferences and/or workshops, newsletters, electronic media and communication - demonstrates an understanding of the target groups' needs and a high likelihood of success. The applicant demonstrates an awareness of and a commitment to coordinating with ACF's Healthy Marriage Resource Center ([www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org)). Applicants should not include a letter of intent from the Healthy Marriage Resource Center with their application.

(4) Quality of proposed staffing and proposed organization arrangements (25 points)

The applicant's proposed director/principal investigator and staff demonstrate appropriate levels of research experience, demonstrated research skills, administrative skills, public administration experience, and relevant technical expertise. Raters may consider references on prior research projects. The applicant demonstrates an adequate level of Director and staff time commitments to the Center. Whether the applicant can maintain a single location for research, teaching, and scholarship is an important consideration. If the applicant proposes a multi-site center the applicant demonstrates that the arrangements can adequately meet the objectives of this solicitation. The applicant demonstrates an ability to work in collaboration with other scholars and practitioners in search of similar goals, especially ACF's Healthy Marriage Resource Center. The applicant demonstrates the nature and extent of the organizational support for research, mentoring scholars, and dissemination in topical areas related to the Center's central priorities. The applicant demonstrates plans to reach out to researchers within the college/university to ensure a multi-disciplinary effort; efforts to develop or expand the Center's presence on campus and in the broader community will be assessed. Applicant demonstrates plans to reach out to researchers at other universities and institutions. Applicant demonstrates plans for selecting the National Advisory Committee. In addition, the awardee must commit to working cooperatively with the ACF-sponsored Healthy Marriage Resource Center. The applicant includes a plan for internal advisory or management teams drawn from a variety of disciplines from within the institution that demonstrates a multi-disciplinary interest and commitment. The applicant demonstrates a commitment of the university (and proposed institutional unit that will contain the Center) to support all three major Center activities: (1) scholarly, policy-relevant research including plans for an extramural research program; (2) the mentoring and development of emerging scholars interested in marriage, family structure, and public policy; and (3) dissemination of research and other information to a broad and disparate set of academic, research, and policy communities. The applicant demonstrates the capacity to work with a range of government agencies.

(5) Adequacy and Appropriateness of Overall Budget and the Allocation of Resources across Administrative, Research and Other Areas (15 points)

The applicant demonstrates: (a) the budget assures an efficient and effective allocation of funds to achieve the objectives of this solicitation; (b) the applicant has additional funding at the match level from other sources, including the host institution, and (c) the applicant has a clear plan for sustainability for the center beyond the five years of federal support.

The application includes a narrative description and justification for proposed budget line items and demonstrates that the project's costs are adequate, reasonable and necessary for the activities or personnel to be supported. The budget and narrative demonstrate a clear relationship to the approach. The budget demonstrates an efficient and effective allocation of funds to achieve the objectives of the Center and this solicitation. The budget demonstrates an appropriate allocation

of funds to support the capacity building functions of the Center - research, mentoring and dissemination as well as core administrative functions necessary to carry out the Center's mission. When additional funding is contemplated, beyond the required match, applicants should note whether the funding is being donated by the institution, is in-hand from another funding source, or will be applied for from another funding source. The applicant demonstrates how the applicant will meet the matching requirement (see section I, Part E). The budget should include travel for advisory board members. No funds should be budgeted to support the Healthy Marriage Resource Center, but funds should be budgeted for coordination with the Healthy Marriage Resource Center.

## **Part IV - The Application**

### **A. General Information**

This part contains information on the preparation of an application for submission under this announcement and the forms necessary for submission. Potential applicants should read this part carefully in conjunction with the information provided in Part II. In general, ASPE seeks organizations which can demonstrate the ability to provide quality research, training of emerging scholars, and working with federal, state and local governments. Applicants for funding should reflect, in the program narrative section of the application, how they will be able to fulfill the responsibilities and requirements described in the announcement. Applications should specify in detail how administrative arrangements will be made to minimize start-up and transition delays. Applications which do not address all three major tasks discussed in Awardee Responsibilities in Part II (research program, mentoring emerging scholars, dissemination) will not be considered for award. It is expected that the applicant will have additional funding and arrangements with other organizations and institutions, including the host institution(s). The applicant should make all current and anticipated related funding arrangements explicit in the application.

In order to be considered for an award under this program announcement, an application must be submitted on the forms supplied and in the manner prescribed by ASPE. Application materials including forms and instructions are available for download through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). For a listing of required forms see Part IV Section F. Copies of materials may also be requested from Roberta Dunlap Wolcott, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 6700B Rockledge Drive, Room 2244, MSC 7614, Bethesda, MD 20892-7614, phone: (301) 451-2685, fax: (301) 493-0597, [WolcottR@niaid.nih.gov](mailto:WolcottR@niaid.nih.gov). Application packages submitted by mail or hand delivered must include an original and two copies of the complete application. All pages of the narrative must be sequentially numbered and unbound.

Applications must be submitted/received in the following format:

1. 12 point font size
2. Double line spacing (except for appendices)
3. 1 inch top, bottom, left, and right margins
4. Page limit of 100 pages (excluding appendices)

Applications that are not received in the format described above and/or exceeding the page limit, will not be reviewed. Applicants are requested to be concise. Applicants are encouraged not to attach or include bound reports or other documents.

## B. Application Development

The National Center for Marriage Research will provide a leadership role in furthering our understanding of the causes and consequences of changes in marriage and childbearing patterns over the past decades; the impact of marriage and family structure on the health and well-being of individuals, families, children and communities; and the policy and program interventions designed to support development of healthy marriages. The National Center will provide the organizational infrastructure to provide leadership in shaping a national agenda for marriage-related research and provide the necessary supports for basic and applied research, reaching out and supporting the broader research community, mentoring emerging scholars, dissemination of findings and securing additional financial support. The applicant should provide a five-year strategic plan for accomplishing this agenda. The plan should build upon and move forward from the accumulated knowledge of past marriage-related research as well as past and anticipated future social, demographic, economic and policy trends. The plan should set out a concrete plan for addressing ASPE's priorities and/or areas of exploration that the applicant may propose. Sustainability of the Center beyond ASPE's five-year financial commitment should be addressed.

The application shall address the following:

### (1) Analysis of Key Trends and Past Research

The application shall present a brief analysis of the key trends (e.g., social, demographic, economic) and past research related to the Center's proposed priority area(s) which provides a basis for the proposed Center's plan to implement a course of study, activities and capacity building. The analysis should examine the nature, causes, and correlates of one or more of the trends as they relate to the Center's priority area(s). The analysis should demonstrate the applicant's grasp of the policy and research significance of recent and future social trends as well as the past research.

### (2) Research Agenda and Activities

A prospectus for a five-year research agenda, outlining the major research themes to be investigated over the next five years should be included. In particular, the prospectus will describe the activities planned for each of the research priority issues outlined in Part II, Awardee Responsibilities, and/or priority research topics proposed by the applicant. The prospectus should discuss the kind of research activities that are needed to anticipate future policy debates on important social issues related to marriage-family structure, and family and

child health and well-being, in particular—and the role of the proposed Research Center in carrying out those activities. The prospectus should clearly build upon the foundation of past marriage research and anticipated trends and policy developments. It may, of course, also discuss research areas and issues that were not mentioned in that analysis if the author or authors of the application feel there have been gaps in past research, or that new factors have begun to affect or soon will begin to affect national social policy. The prospectus should include descriptions of individual research activities that will be expected in the Center's first year of operation. It also should be specific about long-term research themes and projects. The lines of research described in the prospectus should be concrete enough that project descriptions in subsequent research plan amendments can be viewed as articulating a research theme discussed in the prospectus. An application that strikes a coherent theme will be judged more favorably. Applications that focus narrowly on only one or two marriage issues will not be judged favorably.

Note: Once a successful applicant has been selected and the Advisory Committee appointed, they and ASPE will review the research agenda and determine future research priorities. The Center will submit to ASPE a revised research plan that summarizes the deliberations and priorities. The research plan will be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary. The application should discuss a proposed research planning process, including involvement of the National Advisory Committee and other advisors.

The application must also include a detailed dissemination plan that describes the process of disseminating analyses, findings, seminars and related works and activities to interested parties through various media including newsletters, working papers, special reports, briefings and creative use of web based technologies.

The applicant must demonstrate an awareness of ACF's Healthy Marriage Resource Center ([www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org)) as well as plans to coordinate with the Healthy Marriage Resource Center, particularly around dissemination to the program practitioner community. Applicants should not include a letter of intent from the Healthy Marriage Resource Center with their application.

### (3) Staff and Organizational Plan

The application must include a staffing and organizational proposal for the National Center for Marriage Research, including an analysis of the types of background needed among staff members, the National Center's organizational structure, and linkages with the host university and other organizations. It is in this third section that the application should specify how it will assure a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to research, and where appropriate, the necessary links to university/college departments or units, other organizations and scholars engaged in research, and government policy making. The applicant shall identify the Director(s) (or principal investigator(s)) and key senior research staff. Full resumes of proposed staff members shall be included as a separate appendix to the application. The time commitment to the National



Center for Marriage Research and other existing commitments for each proposed staff member shall be clearly indicated in chart form. The kinds of administrative and tenure arrangements, if any, the National Center for Marriage Research proposes to make should also be discussed in this section. In addition, the author(s) of the application and the role which he or she (they) will play in the proposed National Center for Marriage Research must be specified.

If the application envisions an arrangement among two or more colleges, universities or institutions, this section will describe the specifics about the relationships, including leadership, management, and administration. It should pay particular attention to discussing how a focal point for research, teaching, and scholarship will be maintained given the arrangement proposed. The application must describe what steps will be taken to develop or expand the National Center for Marriage Research's presence on campus and in the broader community. The application also should discuss the role, selection procedure, and expected contribution of the external advisory committee.

#### (4) Training and Mentoring Emerging Scholars

The proposal should present a training and mentoring plan for emerging scholars, describing how students will benefit from exposure to and participation in the ongoing research of the National Center for Marriage Research faculty and staff and how students will be encouraged to pursue graduate studies in the social and behavioral sciences with a focus on marriage-related studies. This section shall discuss any financial arrangements for supporting undergraduate and graduate students, research assistants, post-docs, affiliates, resident scholars, etc. The discussion should include the expected number and types of emerging scholars to be supported, the level of support anticipated, and methods to ensure diversity.

#### (5) Budget Narrative

The application's budget summary narrative must link the core management functions, research, mentoring, and dissemination program to the National Center for Marriage Research funding level. This section should discuss how the five-year budget supports proposed research, training, and dissemination activities and should link the first-year funding to a five-year plan. The discussion should include the appropriateness of the level and distribution of funds to the successful completion of the research, training, and dissemination plans. Also, the limited amount of funds available for this award indicate the desirability of using these funds as partial, core support for the proposed Center and applicants are required to secure a substantial and growing match and are further encouraged to seek additional support from other sources. The availability, potential availability or prospects for other funds (from the host university, other universities, foundations, states, other federal agencies, etc.) and the uses to which they would be put, should be documented in this section. Applications which show funding, or well thought out plans to secure funding, from other sources that supplement funds from this grant will be given higher marks than if they have no additional financial support beyond the required match. Plans for sustainability of the Center beyond ASPE's five-year financial commitment should be

addressed. No funds should be budgeted to support the Healthy Marriage Resource Center, but funds should be budgeted for coordination with the Healthy Marriage Resource Center.

### C. Application Submission

You may submit your application to us in either hard copy (paper) or electronic format. To submit an application electronically, please use the <http://www.grants.gov> website.

#### 1. Hard Copy Submissions

- a. Mailed applications postmarked after the closing date will be classified as late.
  
- b. **Deadline.** The closing (deadline) date for submission of applications is AUGUST 2, 2007. Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are either received on or before the deadline date or sent on or before the deadline date and received by ASPE in time for the independent review. Hard copy applications should be sent to: Dr. Don Oellerich, Deputy to the Chief Economist and Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 405F, Washington, DC 20201. Additional contact information is as follows: phone: (202) 690-8410, Fax: (202) 690-6562, email: Don.Oellerich@hhs.gov.

Applicants must ensure that a legibly dated, machine produced postmark of a commercial mail service is affixed to the envelope/package containing the application. To be acceptable as proof of timely mailing, a postmark from a commercial mail service must include the logo/emblem of the commercial mail service company and must reflect the date the package was received by the commercial mail service company from the applicant. Private metered postmarks shall not be acceptable as proof of timely mailing. (Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.)

Applications hand-carried by applicants, applicant couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time, at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in the office of Dr. Don Oellerich, Deputy to the Chief Economist and Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 405F, Washington, DC 20201. (Applicants

are cautioned that courier/express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.)

Applications transmitted by fax will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission or receipt.

## 2. Electronic Submission

a. Electronic submission is voluntary, but strongly encouraged. You may access the electronic application for this program at <http://www.Grants.gov>. There you can search for the downloadable application package by utilizing the Grants.gov FIND function.

We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov. We encourage applicants that submit electronically to submit well before the closing date and time so that if difficulties are encountered an applicant can still submit a hard copy via express mail or other means.

b. Electronic applications will be accepted until 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time of the closing date - electronic applications received after this time will be classified as late.

c. Deadline. The closing (deadline) date for submission of applications is AUGUST 2, 2007. If you use Grants.gov, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. ASPE will not accept grant applications via facsimile or email.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Before you submit an electronic application, you must complete the organization registration process as well as obtain and register "electronic signature credentials" for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Since this process may take more than five business days, it is important to start this process early, well in advance of the application deadline. **Be sure to complete all Grants.gov registration processes listed on the Organization Registration Checklist, which can be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/registration\\_checklist.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/registration_checklist.html).**

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov:

To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. **REMINDER: CCR registration expires each year and thus must be updated annually. You cannot upload an application to Grants.gov without having a current CCR registration AND electronic signature credentials for the AOR.**

The electronic application is submitted by the AOR. To submit electronically, the AOR must obtain and register electronic signature credentials approved by the organization's E-Business Point of Contact who maintains the organization's CCR registration.

You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included in the SF-424 R&R package listed below and all necessary assurances and certifications.

Your application must comply with the 100 page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.

After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. NIAID and ASPE will retrieve your application from Grants.gov.

ASPE may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in hard copy.

If you encounter difficulties in using Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) to report the problem and obtain assistance.

Checklists and registration brochures are maintained at <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted> to assist you in the registration process.

d. When submitting electronically via Grants.gov, applicants must comply with all due dates **AND** times referenced in Section C.2 b and c under **Electronic Submission**.

Applications transmitted by e-mail will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission or receipt.

3. **Late applications.** Applications that do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ASPE will notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

4. **Extension of deadlines.** ASPE may extend an application deadline when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of the mail service, or in other rare cases. Determinations to extend or waive deadline requirements rest with Don Oellerich, ASPE, Department of Health and Human Services.

#### D. Disposition of Applications

1. Approval, disapproval, or deferral. On the basis of the review of the application, the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation will either a) approve the application as a whole or in part; b) disapprove the application; or c) defer action on the application for such reasons as lack of funds or a need for further review.

2. Notification of disposition. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation will notify the applicants of the disposition of their applications. If approved, a signed notification of the award will be sent to the business office named in the application.

3. The Assistant Secretary's Discretion. Nothing in this announcement should be construed as to obligate the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation to make any awards whatsoever. Awards and the distribution of awards among the priority areas are contingent on the needs of the Department at any point in time and the quality of the applications that are received.

E. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number is 93.239.

F. Components of a Complete Application

A complete application consists of the following items in this order:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424 Research and Related Project (R&R));
2. Table of Contents;
3. R&R Project Site Location(s), required only for multi-site applicants;
4. R&R Senior/ Key Personnel;
5. Budget Information - Non-construction Programs (Standard Form 424R&R);
6. R&R Fed-NonFed Budget;
7. Budget Justification for Sections A-J Categories;
8. R&R Other Project Information
9. R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) (Total Fed + nonFed), if necessary;
10. PHS 398 Cover Letter File;
11. PHS 398 Application for Federal Assistance Checklist;
12. Project Narrative Statement, organized in five sections, addressing the following topics (See Part IV, Section B):
  - a) Analysis of Key Trends and Past Research
  - b) Research Agenda and Activities
  - c) Staff and Organizational Plan
  - d) Training and Mentoring Emerging Scholars
  - e) Budget Narrative
13. Any appendices or attachments;
14. Proof of Non-profit Status, if appropriate;

15. Copy of the applicant's Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if necessary;
16. Assurances - Non-construction Programs (Standard Form 424-B R&R);
17. Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace;
18. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, or other Responsibility Matters;
19. Certification and, if necessary, Disclosure Regarding Lobbying;

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Jerry Regier

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

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Date