

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

Program Office: Office of Community Services

Funding Opportunity Title: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 - Strengthening Communities Fund - Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2009-ACF-OCS-SI-0091

CFDA Number: 93.711

Due Date for Applications: 07/07/2009

Executive Summary:

This funding opportunity is being made available under Section 1110 of the Social Security Act, and Title VIII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, P.L. 111-5

http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h1enr.pdf.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Community Services (OCS), announces that applications will be accepted for new cooperative agreements to experienced organizations to provide nonprofit organizations serving as project partners, with capacity building training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance. The focus of this program is to build the capacity of funded projects' nonprofit partners in order to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits.

Lead organizations will assist nonprofit organizations working in distressed communities with capacity building activities that support economic recovery. Specifically, lead organizations will assist grassroots organizations working in distressed communities with

capacity building activities in five critical areas: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability and effectiveness, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those in need.

Successful applicants will be subject to reporting requirements consistent with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 Standard Terms and Conditions. In addition, successful applicants will use a quarterly performance progress report (SF- PPR) format specific to Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) awards.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority

Section 1110 of the Social Security Act governing Social Services Research and Demonstration activities; Title VIII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Public Law (P.L.) 111-5. (http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h1enr.pdf)

Description

A. Background

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is a nationwide effort to sustain and create jobs and transform our economy to compete in the 21st century. The Federal Government recognizes the important work carried out by nonprofit organizations to address the needs of those suffering economic hardships. Under this program, the Government will partner with lead organizations working in distressed communities to sustain and build the capacity of each project's selected local grassroots organizations to better serve individuals in need. Lead organizations awarded funds under this announcement will serve their selected local nonprofit organizations in order to increase those project partners' sustainability and improve their effectiveness. Helping meet the social service needs of individuals, workers, and their families will not only encourage a stronger, healthier workforce but will build vital, enduring communities. Nonprofit organizations need capacity building assistance now to continue to serve those in need in their communities.

Through the Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) Nonprofit Capacity Building program, ACF will award funds to experienced lead organizations to provide nonprofit organizations capacity building training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance to participating nonprofit organizations, which serve as the partners in their projects. Lead organizations will collaborate with their selected grassroots organizations in distressed communities offering capacity building activities in five critical areas: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an project partners' sustainability and effectiveness, enhance their ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those most in need. Funding cannot be used to enhance or expand the capacity of lead organizations beyond what is necessary to accomplish the purpose of the project.

The focus of the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program is to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits. For example, nonprofits receiving competitive financial assistance from their lead organization could use the funds to purchase computers or set up a computer lab to provide free, online information on State and Federal benefits for low- and moderate-income individuals. Funds could be used to perform a local workforce assessment or other research designed to connect workers to employers. Funds could also be used for developing a resource directory to help increase access to the benefits (e.g., ARRA benefits) for which individuals and families are eligible. An organization receiving financial assistance from a lead organization under this announcement could establish a one-stop center where individuals can obtain free, customized benefits information, tax information, information on ARRA, and/or apply for benefits and file tax returns.

The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds pay for the collaborative efforts of lead organizations with their project partners to build capacity that results in improved social service programs and activities, rather than for direct social services. These funds will help participating organizations, selected to be project partners, to build the capacity to expand and strengthen programs and services to help low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, and obtain better-quality jobs, such as by providing job readiness and retention training (e.g., training related to job searching, interviewing,

resume writing, or computer skills); education/training (e.g., academic remediation, General Education Development, English as a Second Language classes, job retraining or training for new job skills such as those needed for green jobs); and other support services related to securing and retaining employment (e.g. emergency cash or food assistance, counseling, transportation, child care, and post-placement support).

The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building funds also will help participating organizations build the capacity to expand and strengthen programs and services aimed at increasing low- and moderate-income individuals' access to the State and Federal benefits and tax credits for which individuals are eligible. Examples include developing organizational capacity to offer a counselor-assisted centralized electronic eligibility screening and application tool; establishing procedures to assess eligibility of prospective and current clients for benefits and tax credits; developing referral protocols with other local service providers; developing a guide/clearinghouse of benefits and tax credits; and developing the capacity to offer free tax preparation assistance. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive as there are many ways that grassroots organizations address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities.

Applicant organizations are encouraged to engage AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers in their programs as AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers play a vital role in serving those in need as well as helping build organizational sustainability. In 2007, 6,825 AmeriCorps*VISTA members served hundreds of nonprofit organizations and public agencies. On average, each AmeriCorps*VISTA member recruited and managed 110 volunteers. AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers raised about \$172 million in cash and in-kind resources. Organizations interested in pursuing an AmeriCorps*VISTA program, must apply through their State AmeriCorps*VISTA office. Organizations will be asked to submit a concept paper identifying and explaining their proposed project model. AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers may be utilized for community outreach and collaborative development. Nonprofit organizations could use AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers to help those seeking employment with child care needs, transportations needs, benefits counseling, computer skills training, or other activities that might be a barrier to securing or improving an employment situation. Under this announcement, bonus points will be awarded to applicant organizations demonstrating that the applicant is an AmeriCorps*VISTA sponsor; that is, the applicant will incorporate at least one AmeriCorps*VISTA member into the program design for the purpose of building the capacity of grassroots organizations to recruit,

retain, and manage volunteers or some other activity of the applicant's SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program. An application must include a signed letter of agreement or MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) with the State or local office of the Corporation for National and Community Service to receive the 2 bonus points. *See Sections IV.2., V.1 and VIII.*

Under this announcement, funded organizations will provide training, technical assistance and competitive financial assistance to nonprofit organizations, whether secular or faith based. These participating nonprofit organizations receiving assistance from lead organizations serve as project partners under this program. Priority is given to applicant organizations serving low-income populations in distressed communities. Priority is given to applicant organizations that demonstrate that they will provide more than the required 55 percent financial assistance to project partners. (This percentage is based on the Federal funds requested and should not be based on matching funds.) *See Section V.1.*

B. Definitions

Capacity Building: Capacity building is the process of implementing activities critical to the long-term viability of organizations by increasing the effectiveness of programmatic activities and organizational operations. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those most in need. *Specific examples of capacity building activities, including those that support economic recovery, are provided in Section I.D. Capacity Building Training and Technical Assistance.*

Distressed Community: For the purposes of this announcement, a distressed community is a neighborhood or other well-defined geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate ***greater than*** the State or national rate.

Experienced Organizations: Under this announcement, applicant organizations should have experience in providing capacity building training, technical assistance and/or competitive financial assistance to smaller grassroots organizations in a well-defined geographic community. ACF encourages applications from organizations that propose to work with and have experience working with grassroots organizations that partner with agencies providing TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) services.

Lead Organizations: For the purposes of this program announcement, a lead organization is the applicant organization proposing to provide nonprofit organizations with capacity building training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance in order to further aid economic recovery efforts. The lead or applicant organization works with nonprofit organizations or project partners.

Project Partners: For the purposes of this program announcement, project partners are nonprofit organizations, whether secular or faith based, participating with the lead organization in the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program. Project partners receive free training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance from the lead organization.

Secular Social Service Programs: Secular social service programs are programs that conform to Federal regulations at 45 CFR Part 87. Generally, this means that such programs: 1) offer a social service to the community, 2) contain no inherently religious content, 3) are separate in time or place from religious activities, and 4) do not require the beneficiaries of the program to attend any inherently religious activity sponsored by the organization, even if such activity is separate in time or place from the secular service program. Nonprofit organizations receiving financial assistance and/or technical assistance must have at least one substantial secular social service program that is intended to benefit as a result of the lead organization's assistance.

Training and Technical Assistance: For purposes of this program announcement, *training* refers to group-based adult education and skill-building activities (e.g., workshops). For purposes of this program announcement, *technical assistance* refers to consultation that is specifically customized or tailored to the needs of the particular nonprofit organization. A minimum of 50 percent of an applicant organization's training and technical assistance strategy must be in the form of direct and individualized technical assistance to address the identified priority needs of the nonprofit project partners (e.g., "one-on-one" assistance to the organization's leadership, key staff, and/or board).

Training and technical assistance activities must produce measurable results for the organizations served. Training and technical assistance activities funded under the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program are to be offered at no cost to interested nonprofit organizations.

Training, Technical Assistance, and Financial Assistance Work Plan: Within 45 days of receipt of an award under this announcement, lead organizations will be required to develop, with

guidance from and in consultation with ACF, a detailed work plan and submit the plan to ACF. ACF will work with lead organizations to develop a concrete training, technical assistance, and financial assistance work plan from their proposed project. ACF must review and approve this plan prior to the issuance of competitive financial assistance, plans, and/or procedures for the issuance of competitive financial assistance awarded under this announcement. ACF approves the plan and reviews and comments on the information collection procedures.

Well-Defined Geographic Location: For purposes of this announcement, the well-defined geographic location is the service area of a lead organization's project. An applicant must describe this service area as part of its application. In all but rare cases, lead organizations will be physically located in the geographic area they propose to serve. In addition, for a lead organization to provide effective training and technical assistance in capacity building, it should demonstrate a cultural sensitivity that establishes credibility with its target audience of grassroots organizations in the geographic area it proposes.

C. Program Purpose and Objectives

The goal of the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program is to stimulate grassroots organizations, whether secular or faith based, to maximize their social impact as they provide services to address economic recovery issues present in their communities. Organizations receiving assistance from lead organizations will be better equipped as a result of this program to help low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to State and Federal benefits and tax credits.

The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program provides funding for lead organizations in well-defined geographic communities with a proven track record of community involvement and experience in providing training and technical assistance to smaller grassroots organizations in those well-defined geographic communities.

The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program does not fund social service provision. Rather, this new program funds capacity building activities that produce measurable effects that result in more sustainable organizations. By addressing issues that are critical to the long-term viability of nonprofit organizations, these organizations are better prepared and positioned to understand and meet the needs of their communities.

Under the Nonprofit Capacity Building program, organizations shall not use direct Federal grants or contracts to support inherently religious activities, such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, a lead organization, and an organization receiving assistance from a lead organization, must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the Federally-funded activities. Some of the ways organizations may accomplish this include, but are not limited to, promoting only the Federally funded program in materials or websites created with any portion of the Federal funds. Further, participation in such activity by individuals receiving services must be voluntary.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with Federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives Federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at either 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 87.1 or the HHS website at <http://www.os.hhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>.

Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building program cooperative agreements are intended to expand the capacity of nonprofit organizations to deliver social services in a secular manner. Funds cannot be used to provide direct client services. Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds can pay for capacity building activities that result in improved social service programs and activities. For example, funds may pay for trainings such as workshops on developing collaborations or strategic partnerships or workshops on program development. Additionally, Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds may purchase equipment or supplies such as computers or computer software that can improve program services. Under this announcement, funds may not pay for capacity building activities that support the provision of direct medical and/or health

care, or for items such as medical equipment or supplies or medically-oriented trainings, certifications, or licensures. Capacity building activities designed to prepare individuals for work in the health care field are allowable.

ACF encourages applications from organizations that propose to work with and have experience working with grassroots organizations that historically have not been supported by Federal funds. Lead organizations must be established organizations with well-developed connections and working relationships with the nonprofit community in the well-defined geographic area they propose to serve. In all but rare cases, lead organizations will be physically located in the geographic area they propose to serve. In addition, for a lead organization to provide effective training and technical assistance in capacity building, it should demonstrate a cultural sensitivity that establishes credibility with its target audience of nonprofit organizations in the geographic area it selects.

ACF will give preference to those highly-ranked applications from nonprofit organizations.

ACF will only provide funds to organizations that demonstrate that the Federal amount requested is reasonable and manageable as evidenced by the organization's last two fiscal years' operating budgets. *See Section V.1. Budget and Budget Justification and V.2. Review and Selection Process*

Approved applicants must be willing to work closely with ACF, and any entities funded by ACF, to coordinate, assist, or evaluate the activities of the lead organizations providing technical assistance and issuing competitive financial assistance.

D. Training, Technical, and Financial Support Services

Lead organizations will provide two services within their communities:

1. Capacity building training and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations; and
2. Competitive financial assistance to some subset of the organizations receiving training and technical assistance.

Capacity Building Training and Technical Assistance

ACF seeks lead organizations with demonstrated ability to provide capacity building training and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations working to help individuals and families facing economic hardship. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to provide training

and technical assistance to participating nonprofit organizations, or project partners, in all five areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. The process the applicant will employ to conduct outreach, identify, and select organizations to receive training and technical assistance must be open to both secular and faith-based organizations. The applicant may accomplish this through either a single organization or through partnerships among several organizations.

In addition, lead organizations are not to use Nonprofit Capacity Building program monies to provide contracts to organizations that provide the lead with a cost share match.

Applicants must submit a coherent work plan for providing training and technical assistance in all five of the critical areas of capacity building. Training and technical assistance activities must produce measurable results for the organizations served. Examples of the kinds of allowable activities that relate to each element are listed below. This list is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. The work plan will detail the training, technical assistance and competitive financial assistance provided to project partners and will be due 45 days after receipt of an award under this announcement. ACF approves the plan and reviews and comments on the information collection procedures.

Please note that direct fundraising, such as costs associated with special events, direct mail campaigns, or solicitation of donors, is in violation of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost principles applicable to most funded organizations including nonprofit organizations. Project partners receiving assistance under this announcement (training, technical assistance, and financial assistance), could use financial assistance for the following:

Examples of Allowable Activities in the Five Critical Capacity Building Areas:

1. Organizational Development
 - Strengthening Board Governance
 - Developing Systems: Management, Human Resources, Financial, Information Technology, Planning
 - Training Job/Benefits Counselors for ARRA Benefits and Other Federal Assistance
 - Developing Comprehensive Communications Strategy

2. Program Development

- Creating Information Systems (e.g., ARRA Benefits/Programs, Financial Benefits/Tax Credits, Social Service Benefits)
- Translating Program Information into Spanish or Other Languages
- Developing Curriculum (e.g., job retraining, new job skills)
- Making Program Improvements

3. Collaboration and Community Engagement

- Disseminating Information Regarding State/Local ARRA Benefits
- Developing Referral Systems Related to ARRA Benefits
- Forging Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Community Colleges or Vocational Schools
- Conducting Research on Local Sector Workforce Needs
- Developing Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Industry-Specific Training Programs
- Utilizing AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteers to Address Needs of Those Seeking Employment
- Assessing Green Needs of Community and Skills Needed for Green Workers

4. Leadership Development

- Specifying Board Composition and Function
- Contributing to Staff Professional and Career Development
- Training and Development of Volunteers
- Developing Succession Planning

5. Evaluation of Effectiveness

- Launching a Formal Program Evaluation
- Developing and Incorporating New Program Measures
- Incorporating Best Practices
- Assessing Program Outcomes
- Replicating Effective Program Models

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Lead organizations must demonstrate their ability to correctly assess the greatest capacity building needs of the organizations they propose to serve. Applicants must describe the process they will use to assist

nonprofit organizations with the identification of organizational needs. Applicants must include a detailed description of pre- and post-assessment methods to be used to determine the measurable impact of training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance activities provided. If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from OMB. This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

It is expected that lead organizations will deliver both training and technical assistance. Training conferences and workshops may be part of an applicant's plan, but they must not be its sole focus. Training and technical assistance activities funded under the Nonprofit Capacity Building program are to be offered at no cost to interested grassroots organizations.

Technical assistance must be provided on a long-term, ongoing basis, rather than through single or short-term contacts, such as a regional or nationwide series of seminars or conferences. The training and technical assistance strategy must address a minimum of three of the identified critical area needs for each nonprofit organization served; although, it is expected that in the aggregate, nonprofit organizations served will represent the full range of all five critical areas. A minimum of 50 percent of training and technical assistance provided by a lead must be in the form of direct and individualized technical assistance to address the identified priority needs of the nonprofit organization (*i.e.*, "one-on-one" assistance to the organization's leadership, key staff and/or board).

Financial Support To Project Partners

Lead organizations will offer financial support to some subset of the organizations receiving training and technical assistance. In particular, lead organizations will be required to issue financial assistance through a competitive process in an amount representing at least 55 percent of the total Federal funds requested. (This percentage should not be calculated on matching funds.) Priority will be given to applications demonstrating that at least 60 percent of the total Federal funds requested will be issued through competitive financial assistance to project partners.

ACF will work closely with organizations that receive funding to ensure that funds are used appropriately and in the most effective manner possible. Within 45 days of receipt of an award under this announcement, lead organizations will be required to develop, with guidance from and in consultation with ACF, a detailed work plan and

submit the plan to ACF. ACF will work with lead organizations to develop their program strategy into a concrete training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance work plan. ACF must review and approve this plan prior to the issuance of any competitive financial assistance, plans, and/or procedures for the issuance of competitive financial assistance awarded under this announcement. ACF approves the plan and reviews and comments on the information collection procedures. Any plans and procedures for issuance of competitive financial assistance must follow the language as outlined in the financial assistance strategy section below. For example, lead organizations will give priority to applicant organizations who document they are working with the designated State or local agency responsible for administering the ACF TANF program (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).

Lead organizations must report on the use of funds by project partners. Lead organizations will also be required to develop, with guidance from and in consultation with ACF, an evaluation plan within six months of receipt of an award for working with project partners receiving financial assistance to develop outcome measures and to evaluate the activities supported by the financial assistance. Lead organizations will be required to comply with national program evaluation efforts, if applicable, and be responsible for project partners' compliance with national evaluation efforts.

Financial Assistance Strategy Requirements

Applications should describe a competitive financial assistance program that incorporates the following criteria (see *Section V.1.*):

- At least 55 percent of the total Federal funds requested will be issued through a competitive financial assistance process.
- The financial assistance application process will be completely open without any recipients being pre-selected or otherwise given a competitive advantage or discriminated against, including discrimination on the basis of the organization's religious character or affiliation.
- All proposed outreach activities for financial assistance applications will include approaches that will reach both secular and faith-based nonprofit organizations.
- The applicant will ensure that all nonprofit organizations with which it works will have full information to ensure their knowledge and awareness that SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds may not be used to build organizations' capacity

to provide programs or services that include inherently religious activities and that if a financial assistance or technical assistance recipient provides programs or services that include inherently religious activities then such activities must be separate in time or location from the programs or services that the organization is seeking to improve through this program. Lead organizations will inform project partners receiving financial assistance that their activities are governed by all applicable Federal laws and regulations including those in 45 CFR 87.1, which states that direct Federal grants, financial assistance funds, or contracts under the Department of Health and Human Services shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization.

- Lead organizations will provide ongoing technical assistance and capacity building support to the organizations to which they issue financial assistance.
- Priority for financial assistance will be given to organizations who document they are working with agencies responsible for administering the ACF TANF program (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).
- Priority for financial assistance will be given to organizations whose annual budgets do not exceed \$500,000.
- Financial assistance will be given to organizations implementing program(s) that address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits.
- There will be no requirement for financial assistance applicants to provide matching funds or given a preference in the selection process if they offer matching funds in their applications.
- While an applicant must be a nonprofit organization, there will be no requirement that applicants have 501(c)(3) status or identify a sponsoring organization with 501(c)(3) status. Acceptable types of proof of nonprofit status may be found in *Section IV.2. Eligibility Certification*.
- Organizations that partner with a lead to deliver technical assistance, or provide part or all of the cost-share (funds or in-kind) for the proposed project, are not be eligible for financial assistance.

- The approach will ensure that financial assistance will be made in amounts manageable for a small organization.
- Lead organizations will not provide recipients of a financial assistance award a second financial assistance award for the duration of the funded period; however, such organizations may participate, at no cost, in the training and technical assistance provided by the lead organization.
- The proposed financial assistance approach will ensure that funds are used for capacity building activities that further the sustainability of project partners' social service efforts and are matched to the developmental needs and levels of the participating organizations (*e.g.*, funds may be provided to fledgling organizations to improve their basic functions, such as attaining 501(c)(3) status or developing sound financial systems).
- Financial assistance will not be used to provide medical services, direct services, direct fundraising activities, nor construction activities, but rather to improve the project partners' efficiency and capacity.

Lead organizations will be accountable for Federal funds received including financial assistance provided to project partners. It is the responsibility of the lead organization to ensure that financial assistance provided to project partners is used for the intended purposes of the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program and that expenditures comply with both program and Federal regulations.

Pre-Application Teleconference

A pre-application teleconference will be offered in advance of the closing date for this announcement. The purpose of this teleconference is to review the program announcement. For information on the day and time for this pre-application teleconference, please visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/OCS> and click on "Strengthening Communities Fund."

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$34,000,000

Expected Number of Awards: 34

Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards: \$1,000,000 per project period

Floor on Amount of Individual Awards: None

Average Projected Award Amount: \$1,000,000 per project period

Length of Project Periods: Other

Explanation of Other:

Under this announcement, there is one project and budget period of 24 months to allow funded organizations to maximize the award in order to provide assistance to nonprofit organizations that is both timely and efficient. No continuation awards will be offered.

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

Additional Information on Awards:

ARRA: One-Time Funding

Unless otherwise specified, funding under this announcement, or any other funding from the ARRA, should be considered one-time funding rather than funding that is anticipated to continue. (See **Standard Terms and Conditions, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Division A Funds** as Attachment 1 at the end of this announcement.)

Description of Anticipated Substantial Involvement under the Cooperative Agreement:

A cooperative agreement is Federal assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Responsibilities of Federal staff and the successful applicants are negotiated prior to an award. Organizations funded under this announcement will work collaboratively with the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program office on the development of products and prior to finalization and dissemination will submit products such as the training, technical assistance, and financial assistance work plan to the program office for

review and approval. ACF approves the plan and reviews and comments on the information collection procedures.

Conditions for the Cooperative Agreement

Organizations selected to receive an award will be responsible for the following:

- Implementing activities described in the project description of the approved application;
- Developing and implementing work plans that will ensure that the services and activities included in the approved application address the needs of nonprofit organizations in an efficient, effective, and timely manner;
- Submitting a training, technical assistance, and financial assistance work plan for Federal review and approval, no later than 45 days after receipt of the Financial Assistance Award and prior to the issuance of any such competitive financial assistance, as well as plans and procedures for the issuance of competitive financial assistance. This plan must adhere to the Financial Assistance Strategy Requirements outlined in the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program announcement. ACF must review and approve this plan prior to the issuance of competitive financial assistance, plans, and/or procedures for the issuance of competitive financial assistance awarded under this announcement. ACF approves the plan and reviews and comments on the information collection procedures;
- Submitting quarterly reports required by Section 1512(c) of the Recovery Act (P.L. 111-5) as well as regular semi-annual financial status and progress reports that describe project activities; *Section VI.3 Reporting Requirements* and to the **Standard Terms and Conditions, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Division A Funds** as Attachment 1 at the end of this announcement.
- Working cooperatively and collaboratively with ACF officials, other Federal agency officials conducting related activities, the other lead organizations approved under the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program and other entities or organizations contracted by ACF to assist in carrying out the purposes of this program;
- Working closely with ACF, and any entities funded by ACF, to coordinate, assist, or evaluate the activities of the lead organizations providing training, technical assistance, and

- competitive financial assistance. This includes ensuring that project partners' receiving financial assistance comply with national evaluation efforts;
- Developing, with guidance from and in consultation with ACF, an evaluation plan within six months of receipt of an award for working with project partners receiving financial assistance to develop outcome measures and to evaluate the activities supported by the financial assistance;
 - Ensuring that two key staff attend and participate in ACF-sponsored workshops and meetings, including the initial orientation meeting; and
 - Ensuring that SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds, including financial assistance to project partners, are not used to support religious practices such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization.

Recipients of HHS awards will be accountable for the Federal funds received including those dispersed to project partners. Funded organizations are responsible for the oversight of the various projects, programs and activities supported by the award. See 45 CFR 75.51(a) and 92.40(a).

Direct Federal grants, competitive financial assistance funds, or contracts under the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from Federally-funded activities. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which include the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at either 45 CFR 87.1 or the HHS website at <http://www.os.hhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>. An awarded application and release of funds does not constitute or imply compliance with Federal regulations; funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with Federal regulations.

ACF hereby agrees to the following:

- To promote collaborative relationships and facilitate the exchange of information (e.g., identifying technical assistance and training needs, emerging issues, research findings, available resources, model programs) among funded lead organizations and between the lead organizations and other entities or organizations engaged by ACF for purposes related to this new program;

- To provide consultation to each approved lead organization with regard to the development of work plans, approaches to address problems that arise, and identification of areas needing technical assistance;
- To provide timely review, comments, and decisions on work plans and procedures submitted by funded lead organizations;
- To sponsor meetings among lead organizations (technical assistance providers) funded under the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program to promote coordination, information sharing, and access to resources, training and learning opportunities; and
- To work together to address issues or problems identified by the lead organization, ACF, or others with regard to the lead organization's ability to carry out the full range of activities included in the approved application in the most efficient and effective manner.

Please see *Section IV.5* for any restrictions on the use of funds for awards made under this announcement.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

- State governments
- County governments
- City or township governments
- Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- Indian/Native American Tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Indian/Native American Tribal governments (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) IRS status (other than institutions of higher education)
- Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) IRS status (other than institutions of higher education)
- Private institutions of higher education
- For-profit organizations (other than small businesses)
- Small businesses
- Special district governments

Foreign entities are not eligible under this announcement.

Faith-based and community organizations are eligible to apply under this announcement.

Please see "Eligibility Certification" found in *Section IV.2* for any required documentation supporting eligibility.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: Yes

Grantees must provide at least 20 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (Federal) share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$1,000,000, in ACF (Federal) funds must provide a non-Federal share of the approved total project cost of at least \$250,000, which is 20 percent of total approved project cost of \$1,250,000. Grantees will be held accountable for commitments of non-Federal resources even if they exceed the amount of the required match. Failure to provide the required amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds. A lack of supporting documentation at the time of application will not exclude the application from competitive review.

The following chart demonstrates several examples of minimum cost shares:

Federal Request	20 Percent Cost Share	Total Approved Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
\$500,000	\$125,000	\$625,000
\$200,000	\$50,000	\$250,000

3. Other:

Organizations that partner with a lead organization to deliver technical assistance, or provide part or all of the cost share (funds or in-kind) for the proposed project, are not eligible for financial assistance.

Nonprofit organizations receiving financial assistance and/or technical assistance must have at least one substantial secular social service

program that will benefit as a result of the lead organization's assistance.

Disqualification Factors

Applications with requests that exceed the ceiling on the amount of individual awards referenced in *Section II*. Award Information will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.3.*, Submission Dates and Times, will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package:

Eduardo Hernandez
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services Operation Center
Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building
1515 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: 800-281-9519
Email: OCS@lcgnet.com

For hearing or speech impaired callers, contact the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY (Text Telephone) / ASCII (American Standard Code For Information Interchange)).

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

This section provides information on the required form and content of application submissions. Applicants are required to submit one original and two copies of all application materials if applying in hard-copy. The original signature of the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) is required only on the original. Information on the required format, Standard Forms (SFs) and other forms, D-U-N-S Requirement, Project Description, Certifications, Assurances, Electronic Submission of applications, and Hard Copy submission of applications is available in this section. A Checklist of required application elements is available for applicants' use in *Section VIII* of this announcement.

General

The application must be double-spaced and single-sided on 8.5" x 11" plain white paper, with 1" margins on all sides. The application must use Times New Roman 12-point font or Arial 12-point font.

The Table of Contents must not exceed one page. Pages submitted beyond one page will not be considered during the panel review.

The Project Abstract must not exceed one page. Pages submitted beyond one page will not be considered during the panel review.

The Project Narrative must not exceed 25 pages. Pages submitted beyond the first 25 in the application's Project Narrative section will not be considered during the panel review.

The Appendix must not exceed 20 pages. The Appendix may include the sample assessment tool(s) to be used to assist organizations served in identifying organizational needs in the five critical capacity building areas and any other additional supporting documentation. Pages submitted beyond 20 pages will not be considered during the panel review.

The Budget, Narrative Budget Justification, Standard Forms for Assurances, Certifications, Disclosures, and cost-share letters are not included in the Project Narrative and Appendix page limitations.

All pages of the application must be sequentially numbered.

Applicants should not send pamphlets, brochures, or other printed material along with their applications. These materials, if submitted, will not be included in the review process. In addition, applicants should not submit any additional letters of endorsement beyond any that may be required.

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.

Forms

Applicants seeking financial assistance under this announcement must file the appropriate Standard Forms (SFs) as described in this section. All applicants must submit an SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. For non-construction programs, applicants must also submit an SF-424A, Budget Information and an SF-424B, Assurances. For construction programs, applicants must also submit SF-424C, Budget Information and SF-424D, Assurances. All required Standard Forms are available at:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the *"Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants"* with their applications. Applicants using a hard copy application, place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with your application package. Applicants applying electronically, please submit this survey along with your application. The Survey may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Please reference Section IV.3 for details about acknowledgement of received applications.

D-U-N-S Requirement

All applicants must have a D&B Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number. A D-U-N-S number is required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal, [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. A D-U-N-S number may be acquired 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 online at <http://www.dnb.com>.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Part I 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. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal

funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. 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

ACF is particularly interested in specific 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.

Part II GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation 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.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

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

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

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

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED

Identify the results and benefits to be derived.

For example, an outcome is defined as any benefit or change in the capacity of nonprofit organizations after receiving services. Outcome measures should indicate progress towards the following outcomes in the nonprofit organizations served: 1) improving knowledge and skills in the effective operation of social service organizations and programs; 2) implementing management and organizational improvements; 3) expanding and enhancing social services to help individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, or obtain better-quality jobs; and 4) expanding and enhancing social services to address individuals' access to State and Federal benefits. Outcome measures should include, at a minimum, the number of management and organizational improvements implemented; the number of expansions and enhancements of social services; and the number of additional persons served as a result of the funded capacity building activities. This and other outcome information related to economic recovery efforts, will be requested as a part of required quarterly performance progress reports.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Applicants should describe their approach to provide training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance to nonprofit organizations that are working to address broad economic recovery issues present in their communities including assisting those in need. Applicants should demonstrate the ability to address all of the five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness either on its own or through partnerships. An applicant's proposed training and technical assistance capacity building activities must address the identified needs of project partners in each of the five critical areas of capacity building. An applicant's Nonprofit Capacity Building project must be open to both secular and faith-based organizations. The schedule for accomplishing funded activities and major milestones must be logical and attainable. An applicant's training and technical assistance strategy should be comprehensive; include a reasonable process to outreach to, identify, and select organizations with capacity building needs to receive training and technical assistance; and provide a rationale for proposed estimates for the number and types of organizations expected to receive training and technical assistance.

An applicant should describe thoroughly how they will provide appropriate one-on-one technical assistance to project partners. An applicant should demonstrate that the proposed plan and approach meets the requirement that a minimum of 50 percent of the training and technical assistance provided by the lead organization must be in the form of direct and individualized technical assistance to address the identified priority needs of the individual project partners (i.e., "one-on-one" assistance to the organization's leadership, key staff and/or board).

Applicants must describe a financial assistance program that incorporates the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program guidelines for provision of financial assistance to nonprofit organizations through a competitive process. See Section I.D. Financial Assistance Strategy Requirements. In particular, an applicant must describe a plan for identifying and selecting financial assistance recipients through a competitive process that is complete and reasonable and includes the following: 1) a timeline for at least two separate, complete financial assistance cycles to be offered during the 2-year period; 2) an outreach or marketing strategy; 3) estimates for the types and number of organizations expected to apply for and receive funding; 4) the independent review/scoring process of financial assistance applications; and 5) the capacity building needs for which competitive

financial assistance may be used that conform with the requirements in this announcement.

An applicant's evaluation plan should include a description of data collection instruments and/or interview protocols such as capacity building surveys or organizational needs assessments to be used to assess the needs of participating project partners. The evaluation plan should also include a pre- and post-assessment of project partners to identify results and benefits associated with receipt of training, technical assistance and financial assistance. Applications should provide documentation that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community, engages organizations that serve low-income populations, and addresses a vital need in a distressed community. Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building program cooperative agreements are intended to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits. Funds cannot be used to provide direct client services. As a program of ACF, the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program is intended to support organizations that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. As such, Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds can pay for capacity building activities that result in improved social service programs and activities that help those facing economic hardships. For example, funds may pay for trainings such as workshops on developing collaborations or strategic partnerships or workshops on program development. Additionally, funds may purchase equipment or supplies such as computers or computer software that can improve program services.

Under this announcement, bonus points will be awarded to applicant organizations demonstrating that the applicant is an AmeriCorps*VISTA sponsor; that is, the applicant will incorporate at least one AmeriCorps*VISTA member into the program design for the purpose of building the capacity of grassroots organizations to recruit, retain, and manage volunteers or some other activity of the applicant's SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program. For example, nonprofit organizations could use AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers to help those seeking employment with child care needs, transportations needs, benefits counseling, computer skills training, or other activities that might be a barrier to securing or improving an employment situation. An application must include a signed letter of agreement or MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) with the State or local office of the

Corporation for National and Community Service to receive the 2 bonus points.

Under this announcement, bonus points will be awarded to applicant organizations demonstrating that the applicant will provide at least 60 percent of the total Federal funds requested in financial assistance to project partners. Applicants demonstrating 60 percent or more in financial assistance to project partners in both Approach and Budget sections will be awarded three bonus points. This percentage should not be calculated on matching funds.

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.

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

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from OMB. This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

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

EVALUATION

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and the results of the project will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state how you will determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following are requests for additional information that must be included in the application:

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Applicants must provide the following as certification of their eligibility under this program announcement. Please provide:

Proof of Non-Profit Status

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a State taxing body, State attorney general, or other appropriate State official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a State or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

When applying electronically, proof of non-profit status may be submitted as an attachment; however, proof of non-profit status must be submitted prior to award.

LOGIC MODEL

Applicants are expected to use a model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Provide a biographical sketch and job description for each key person appointed. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff is appointed, biographical sketches will also be required.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

Provide information on the applicant organization(s) and cooperating partners, such as: organizational charts; financial statements; audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants/Licensed Public Accountants; Employer Identification Number(s); contact persons and telephone numbers; names of bond carriers; child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation; information on compliance with Federal/State/local government standards; documentation of experience in the program area; and, other pertinent information.

THIRD-PARTY AGREEMENTS

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.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions should be included in the application package or by the application deadline.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide a budget with line-item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information Form (SF-424A or SF-424C). Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching is a requirement, include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

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

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.

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, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

TRAVEL

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

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops 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 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 organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use 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.

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, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

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, other than States that are required to use 45 CFR Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 USC 403(11), currently set at \$100,000.

Recipients might be required to make available to ACF pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

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

OTHER

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional

services costs; space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

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

INDIRECT CHARGES

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant Federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, 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.

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.

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

(As required by the **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, P.L. 104-13**, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing

instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 4/30/2010. 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.)

Certifications

Applicants must furnish, prior to award, an executed copy of the Certification Regarding Lobbying. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application. 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 Standard Form (SF)-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. The Certification Regarding Lobbying may be found at:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

When required for programs that involve human subjects, the Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption form must be submitted. All forms may be reproduced for use in submitting applications. Applicants must sign and return the appropriate standard forms with their application. The Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule) form may be found at:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Assurances

By signing and submitting the application, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.

The Pro-Children Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. 7183, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion

of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with Federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity. Additional information may be found in the HHS Grants Policy Statement at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_related.html.

Electronic Submission

Applicants to ACF may submit their applications in either electronic or paper (hard copy) format. To submit an application electronically, applicants must use the <http://www.Grants.gov> site. ACF will not accept applications via facsimile or email.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before submitting an application electronically, applicants must complete the organization registration process as well as obtain and register "electronic signature credentials" for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Applicants also must be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). **CCR registration must be updated annually. Applicants will not be able to upload an application to Grants.gov without current CCR registration and electronic signature credentials for the AOR. This process may take more than five business days, so 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 at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/registration_checklist.html.

Applicants 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.

If planning to submit an application electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>:

- **It is strongly recommended that applicants do not wait until the application due date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.** Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications well before the closing date and time so that, if difficulties are encountered, there will still be sufficient time to submit a hard copy via express mail.
- **In order to address any difficulties that may be encountered during the submission process, it may be to an applicant's advantage to submit their applications 24 hours ahead of the closing date and time.**
- Applicants are encouraged to check the Grants.gov webpage for announcements concerning system issues and updates that may affect the submission of applications.
- Checklists and registration brochures are maintained at the Grants.gov website to assist applicants in the registration process and may be found at:
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp
- If any difficulties are encountered in using Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. **Remember to retain your service ticket number for reference whenever you have any interaction with the Grants.gov Contact Center.**
- Electronic submission is voluntary, but strongly encouraged. Applicants will not receive additional point value for submitting an application in electronic format, nor will ACF penalize any applicant that submits an application in hard copy.
- Applicants may access the electronic application and downloadable application package for this program announcement by using the FIND function at <http://www.Grants.gov>.
- Applicants may submit all required documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF-424s, narratives, charts, etc.
- Electronic formats for the application attachments, such as narratives, charts, etc., should use standard software formats, e.g., Microsoft (Word and Excel), Word Perfect, Adobe PDF, JPEG, and GIF, etc..
- Though applying electronically, the application must still comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.

- When submitting an application via Grants.gov, applicants must comply with all due dates **AND** times referenced in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this program announcement.
- Applicants that must demonstrate proof of non-profit status may submit proof at the time of application by attaching the documentation to the electronic application, if they wish to do so. Proof of non-profit status, and any other required documentation, may be scanned and attached as an "Other Attachment." Assurances, certifications, and/or proof of non-profit status that are not submitted electronically at the time of application, are required to be submitted to ACF by the time of award and in hard copy. Acceptable types of proof of non-profit status are stated earlier in this section of the program announcement under "Eligibility Certification."
- It is **strongly recommended** that the applicant retain a printed hard copy of the application in case a hard copy must be submitted to ACF.

After the application is submitted electronically, the applicant will receive two emails from Grants.gov:

- An automatic acknowledgement of the application's submission that will provide a Grants.gov tracking number.
- An acknowledgement that the submitted application package has passed or failed a series of checks and validations.

ACF will retrieve the electronically submitted application from Grants.gov. Applicants will receive an email notification from ACF acknowledging that ACF has received the application.

ACF may request that the applicant provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

The Grants.gov website complies with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Grants.gov webpages are designed to work with assistive technologies such as screen readers. If an applicant uses assistive technology and is unable to access any material on the site, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov for assistance.

Hard Copy Submission of Applications

Applicants that are submitting their application in paper format should submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments, unless directed otherwise. The original and each of the

two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See Section IV.6 of this announcement for address information for application submissions.

Please refer to *Section VIII* for a checklist of application requirements, their location and due dates that applicants may use in developing and organizing application materials.

Please refer to *Section IV.3* for details concerning acknowledgement of received applications.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Due Date for Applications: 07/07/2009

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is referenced above. Applications received after 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date will be classified as late and will not be considered in the current competition.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that applications are mailed or hand-delivered or submitted electronically well in advance of the application due date and time.

Mail

Applications that are submitted by mail must be received no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above at the address listed in *Section IV.6*.

Hand Delivery

Applications hand carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representatives of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers must be received on or before the due date referenced above, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., eastern time, at the address referenced in *Section IV.6*, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

Electronic Submission

Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., eastern time, on the due date referenced above.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by facsimile or email.

Late Applications

Applications that do not meet the requirements above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

ANY APPLICATION RECEIVED AFTER 4:30 P.M., EASTERN TIME, ON THE DUE DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPETITION.

Extension of Deadlines

ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur; when there are widespread disruptions of mail service; or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

Acknowledgement of Received Application

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail, courier services, or by hand delivery. Applicants who submit their application packages electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov> will receive two email acknowledgements from that website:

- An automatic acknowledgement of the application's submission that will provide a Grants.gov tracking number.
- An acknowledgement that the submitted application package has passed or failed a series of checks and validations.

4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs:

State Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities". Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O.

12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

5. Funding Restrictions:

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are unallowable under this grant award.

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.

The SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program does not fund direct social service provision; funds cannot be used to provide direct client services.

The cost of the augmentation or supplanting of direct services is unallowable.

Direct Federal grants, financial assistance funds, or contracts under the Department of Health and Human Services shall not be used to

support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization.

Organizations that receive HHS funds may not engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with HHS funds.

An organization receiving SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building funds shall not, in providing Federally-funded services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.

Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building program funds may not pay for capacity building activities that support the provision of direct medical and/or health care, nor for items such as medical equipment or supplies or medically-oriented trainings, certifications, or licensures. Lead organizations may not provide financial assistance to a health care organization. Capacity building activities designed to prepare individuals for work in the health care field are allowable.

Lead organizations are not to use funds to provide contracts to organizations that provide the lead with a cost share match.

6. Other Submission Requirements:

Submit applications to one of the following addresses:

Submission by Mail

Eduardo Hernandez
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services Operations Center
Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building
1515 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22209

Hand Delivery

Eduardo Hernandez
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services Operations Center
Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building
1515 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100
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.3* for information on due dates.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. CRITERIA:

Competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the criteria described in this section. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each review criterion. Applicants should address these criteria in the process of developing their application, as they are the basis upon which their applications will be judged. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT - 3 points

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it includes a project summary/abstract, not to exceed one page, that briefly describes: the applicant organization; the distressed, well-defined service area; the needs of the service area; the training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance project; and an estimate of the numbers and types of organizations expected to receive training and technical assistance and/or competitive financial assistance.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 10 points

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates that the organization is established and has well-developed connections to and working relationships with the nonprofit community in the well-defined geographic area they propose to serve.

(a) Service Area (2 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant identifies a specific, well-defined service area for project implementation. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a prior history of

involvement in and connectedness to the proposed service area to ensure that the impact of services provided is local and sustained.

(b) Needs of Service Area (4 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the specific needs and service availability of the targeted service area are documented and linked to the broad economic recovery focus of this announcement. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which documentation is provided demonstrating that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community and engages organizations that serve low-income populations and that are working to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to State and Federal benefits and tax credits. ***See Definitions Section I.B. for distressed community.***

(c) Needs of Nonprofits in Service Area (2 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes the capacity building needs of nonprofit organizations working to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their proposed service area and provides documentation of those needs from third-party sources, as available. The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the needs of the grassroots organizations served by the lead organization are linked to the proposed allowable capacity building approach and strategies.

(d) Project Objectives (2 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant's objectives are S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely), relate to its evaluation design, and support the purposes set forth in this announcement to build the organizational capacity of nonprofit organizations in all five critical areas: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness.

APPROACH - 35 points

(a) Training/Technical Assistance Strategy (15 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates the applicant's ability to provide training and technical assistance in all of the five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation

of effectiveness either on its own or through partnerships. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which outreach and eligibility for technical assistance will reach and be open to both secular and faith-based organizations.

The application will also be evaluated on the extent to which the schedule for accomplishing funded activities and major milestones are logical and attainable.

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the outlined training and technical assistance strategy is comprehensive; includes a reasonable process to outreach to, identify, and select organizations with capacity building needs to receive training and technical assistance; and provides a rationale for proposed estimates for the number and types of organizations expected to receive training and technical assistance.

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which plans for providing training and technical assistance thoroughly address all five critical areas of capacity building so that at a minimum, three of the identified capacity building critical area needs for each organization served will be addressed.

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes thoroughly how the applicant will provide appropriate one-on-one technical assistance to project partners receiving competitive financial assistance. An application will be evaluated on whether the proposed plan and approach meets the requirement that a minimum of 50 percent of the training and technical assistance provided by lead organizations must be in the form of direct and individualized technical assistance to address the identified priority needs of the participating project partners (*i.e.*, "one-on-one" assistance to the organization's leadership, key staff and/or board). An application will be evaluated to the extent that it specifies who will provide the training and technical assistance, specifically whether it will be the responsibility of the funded organization, consultant(s) or contractor(s), or a combination.

Applicants should review *Section IV.2. APPROACH* to incorporate the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program requirements into the proposed training and technical assistance strategy. See also *Section I.D. Capacity- Building Training and Technical Assistance*.

(b) Financial assistance Strategy (20 points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant's plan for identifying and selecting financial assistance recipients through a competitive process is complete and reasonable and includes the following: 1)

provides a timeline for at least two separate, complete financial assistance cycles to be offered during the 2-year period; 2) describes the outreach or marketing strategy; 3) provides logical estimates for the types and number of organizations expected to apply for and receive funding; 4) describes the independent review/scoring process of financial assistance applications; and 5) identifies and justifies capacity building needs for which competitive financial assistance may be used that conform with the requirements in this announcement.

Applicants should review *Section I.D. Financial assistance Strategy Requirements* to incorporate the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program requirements into the proposed financial assistance program.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES - 27 points

(a) Past Experience (15 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates that the applicant has a proven track record in providing training and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, including concrete examples with specific dates of training and technical assistance that the applicant has provided relating to all five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. If organizations propose to collaborate to provide lead services, the application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that these organizations possess well-developed working relationships and a history of working together prior to the announcement of this funding opportunity. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates that the proposed geographic coverage area is distressed, well-defined, and reasonable given the physical location of the lead organization and will support the development of ongoing relationships with the lead's project partners. See *Definitions Section I.B.* for distressed community.

(b) Organizational Capability (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes how the organization is well positioned to support the project and how the proposed project fits into the structure of the applicant's organization. An application will be evaluated to the extent that it provides evidence of facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources that are adequate to achieve project goals. The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the organization's existing mission/purpose and activities are

complementary and will support the proposed Nonprofit Capacity Building project. The interaction of this project with other non-funded activities within the organization and any implications should be clearly explained.

(c) Project Management Structure and Staffing (7 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it includes a listing and description of all key positions required to carry out the project, the individuals proposed to fill the positions, a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform, and a one-page organization chart, including staff names, if known. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it provides evidence demonstrating the staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities, such as evidence that demonstrates not only the staff's good technical skills, but also a clear record of working with nonprofit organizations.

An application will also be evaluated on the extent to which the above information is provided with regard to consultants or staff from other organizations proposed to work on the project. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it clearly defines and documents any proposed partnerships with other organizations for purposes of this application, (*e.g.*, significant contributions to the proposed project by each partner; a formal agreement among parties; defined roles and responsibilities appropriate to their natural strengths; and shared decision-making responsibility.)

EVALUATION - 15 points

(a) Evaluation Design (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the evaluation design includes: a program logic model *or* other illustration *or* narrative explanation of the relationship between proposed activities and anticipated outcomes; a process component that will document the activities of the project and how the project operates; and an outcomes measurement component that will assess the extent to which the project achieves the expected results. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes how project data will be gathered and maintained in regards to the applicant's evaluation design, including pre-and post-assessment data. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes how project data will be analyzed to determine whether capacity building activities were implemented and achieved measurable results within the organizations served. An application will be evaluated on the extent that the Authorized Entity includes in the application a statement that it will fully participate in a national evaluation of the SCF State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity

Building program. **Applicants should review *Section IV.2. Results or Benefits Expected, under General Instructions for the Full Project Description*, to address specific evaluation guidelines for the SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program.**

(b) Pre-Assessment Strategy (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it describes the methods, strategies, and/or tools, that will be used to provide a baseline assessment of nonprofit organizations' capacity prior to receiving training and technical assistance from the lead organization. The pre-assessment must address all of the five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. An application will be evaluated to the extent that the proposed approach for assessing the organizational capacity building needs of nonprofit organizations is thorough and reasonable and not limited to the preferences or specific interests/capabilities of the lead organization.

(c) Post-Assessment Strategy (5 Points). Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which they describe the methods, strategies, and/or tools that will be used to provide a post-assessment of an organization's capacity after receiving training and/or technical assistance from the lead. In particular, the post-assessment should focus on measuring the results and impact of the training, technical assistance, and, where applicable, competitive financial assistance activities. An application will be evaluated to the extent that the post-assessment strategy addresses all of the five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness either on their own or through partnerships. An application will also be evaluated on the extent to which it provides a plan detailing assessment intervals for nonprofit organizations served.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

(a) Project Budget (8 points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it includes a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and provides a detailed justification for the amount requested. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it provides a comprehensive budget reflecting the full 24-month period that specifies that at least 55 percent of the total Federal funds

requested will be provided as financial assistance to project partners. This percentage should not be calculated on matching funds.

An application will be evaluated to the extent that it includes the cost of travel-related expenses for two key personnel with responsibility for the Nonprofit Capacity Building award to attend a mandatory two-day orientation workshop in Washington, DC. An application will also be evaluated on the extent to which the budget includes at least a 20 percent cost share of the total approved project cost from non-Federal funds. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. **Please refer to *Section III.2.* for information on Cost Sharing or Matching including sample calculations.**

Applicants should refer to the budget information presented in the SF-424 and SF-424A and to the BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION instructions in *Section IV.2.*, General Instructions for the Full Project Description.

(b) Last Two Fiscal Years' Operating Budgets (2 points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it includes the last two fiscal years' operating budgets of the applicant and that these budgets demonstrate that the total Federal amount requested is reasonable and manageable. The application will be evaluated based on the extent to which the amount requested under the funding announcement is proportional to the size of the applicant's recent operating budgets. For example, it would be unreasonable for an organization that operated with \$300,000 in 2007 and \$350,000 in 2008 to request \$1,000,000 in Federal funds.

Detailed breakdowns of the organizational operating budget are not required.

BONUS POINTS - 5 points

AmeriCorps*VISTA Bonus Points (2 points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it is an AmeriCorps*VISTA sponsor; that is, the applicant will incorporate at least one AmeriCorps*VISTA member into the program design for the purpose of building the capacity of grassroots organizations to recruit, retain, and manage volunteers or some other activity of the applicant's SCF Nonprofit Capacity Building program. An application must include a signed letter of agreement or MOA (Memorandum of

Agreement) with the State or local office of the Corporation for National and Community Service to receive the 2 bonus points possible under this criterion. For more information about the AmeriCorps*VISTA program, visit <http://www.americorps.org>

Additional Financial Assistance Beyond the 55 Percent Requirement (3 points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates that the applicant will provide at least 60 percent of the total Federal funds requested in financial assistance to project partners. Applicants demonstrating 60 percent or more in financial assistance to project partners in both Approach and Budget sections will be awarded three bonus points. This percentage should not be calculated on matching funds.

2. Review and Selection Process:

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application.

Initial ACF Screening: Each application will be screened to determine whether it was received by the closing date and time and whether the requested amount exceeds the stated ceiling. Late applications or those exceeding the funding limit will be returned to the applicants with a notation that they were unacceptable and will not be reviewed.

Applications that pass the initial ACF screening will be reviewed and scored competitively. Experts in the field, generally persons from outside the Federal Government, will use the evaluation criteria listed in *Section V.1.* of this announcement to review and score the applications. The strengths and weaknesses of the application as identified by expert reviewers will be a primary factor in making funding decisions. ACF may also solicit comments from Regional Office staff and other Federal agencies. ACF will consider a variety of factors in addition to the review criteria identified above, including geographic diversity/coverage and types of applicant organizations and the service area, in order to ensure that the interests of the Federal Government are met in making the final selections. ACF will give preference to those highly-ranked applications from nonprofit organizations.

Furthermore, ACF may limit the number of awards made to the same or affiliated organizations although they would serve different geographic areas. ACF will only provide funds to organizations that demonstrate that the Federal amount requested is reasonable and manageable as evidenced by the organization's last two fiscal years' operating budgets.

ACF will give preference to organizations that demonstrate that they are working with AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers.

ACF will give preference to applicant organizations that demonstrate that they will provide more than the required 55 percent financial assistance -- at least 60 percent -- to project partners. (This percentage is based on the Federal funds requested and should not be based on matching funds.)

Applications must adhere to the funding restrictions described in Section IV.5.

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

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications that are approved but unfunded may be held over for funding in the next funding cycle, pending the availability of funds, for a period not to exceed one year.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates:

September 2009

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices:

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) document 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.

Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter, signed by the Program Office head.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grantees are subject to the administrative requirements in 45 CFR Part 74 (for non-governmental entities) or 45 CFR Part 92 (for governmental entities).

Direct Federal grants, sub-award funds, or contracts under this ACF program shall not be used to support inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization. Therefore, organizations must take steps to separate, in time or location, their inherently religious activities from the services funded under this program. Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, can be found at the HHS web site at: <http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/waisgate21.pdf>.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with Federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives Federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS funded activities.

Additional information on "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Community Initiative" can be found at: <http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/regulations/index.html>.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services new single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. Unlike previous HHS policy documents, the GPS is intended to be shared with and used by grantees. It became effective October 1, 2006 and is applicable to all Operating Divisions (OPDIVS), such as the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), except the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The GPS covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important OPDIV-specific requirements. Appendices include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The GPS may be accessed at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_related.html.

Other Administrative and National Policy Requirements

An awarded application and release of funds does not constitute or imply compliance with Federal regulations; funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with Federal regulations.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Grantees will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Frequency of reporting is listed later in this section.

Beginning with FY 2009 awards, most ACF grantees will begin using the a Standard Form (SF) for required performance progress reporting (PPR). The SF-PPR is a standard government-wide performance progress reporting format consisting of a series of forms implemented by Federal agencies to collect performance information from award recipients. Most ACF grantees will begin using the standard format implemented through ACF's Office of Grants Management (OGM), entitled the "ACF-OGM-SF-PPR." Use of the ACF-OGM-SF-PPR will begin for new awards and continuation awards made by ACF in FY 2009. At a minimum, grantees will be required to submit the ACF-OGM-SF-PPR, which consists of the ACF-OGM-SF-PPR Coversheet and the ACF-OGM-SF-PPR Appendix B Program Indicators.

ACF Programs that utilize other SF-PPR reporting formats, or other reporting forms or formats that differ from the new ACF-OGM-SF-PPR, have listed those forms or formats below. Grant award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use beginning in FY 2009.

Grantees will continue to use the Financial Status Report (FSR) SF-269 (long form) for required financial reporting.

The SF-269 (long form) and the ACF-OGM-SF-PPR may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html. Grantees should consult their award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award.

Performance progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period. Final program performance and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in Section VII. of this announcement.

Program Progress Reports: Quarterly
Financial Reports: Quarterly

Grantees under this program will use a quarterly performance progress report (SF- PPR) specific to Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) awards. The SCF SF-PPR is currently in development.

Recipient Reporting

Recipients of Federal awards from funds authorized under Division A of the ARRA must comply with all requirements specified in Division A of the ARRA (Public Law 111-5), including reporting requirements outlined in Section 1512 of the Act. For purposes of reporting, ARRA recipients must report on ARRA sub-recipient (sub-grantee and sub-contractor) activities as specified below.

Not later than 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, starting with the quarter ending June 30, 2009 and reporting by July 10, 2009, the recipient must submit quarterly reports to HHS that will posted to Recovery.gov, containing the following information:

- a. The total amount of ARRA funds under this award;
- b. The amount of ARRA funds received under this award that were obligated and expended to projects or activities;
- c. The amount of unobligated award balances;
- d. A detailed list of all projects or activities for which ARRA funds under this award were obligated and expended, including
 - The name of the project or activity;
 - A description of the project or activity;
 - An evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;
 - An estimate of the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the project or activity; and
 - For infrastructure investments made by State and local governments, the purpose, total cost, and rationale of the agency for funding the infrastructure investment with funds made available under this Act, and the name of the person to contact at the agency if there are concerns with the infrastructure investment.
- e. Detailed information on any sub-awards (sub-contracts or sub-grants) made by the grant recipient to include the data elements required to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-282).

For any sub-award equal to or larger than \$25,000, the following information:

- The name of the entity receiving the sub-award;
 - The amount of the sub-award;
 - The transaction type;
 - The North American Industry Classification System code or Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
 - Program source;
 - An award title descriptive of the purpose of each funding action;
 - The location of the entity receiving the award;
 - The primary location of performance under the award, including the city, State, congressional district, and country; and
 - A unique identifier of the entity receiving the award and of the parent entity of the recipient, should the entity be owned by another entity.
- f. All sub-awards less than \$25,000 or to individuals may be reported in the aggregate, as prescribed by HHS.
- g. Recipients must account for each ARRA award and sub-award (sub-grant and sub-contract) separately. Recipients will draw down ARRA funds on an award-specific basis. Pooling of ARRA award funds with other funds for drawdown or other purposes is not permitted.
- h. Recipients must account for each ARRA award separately by referencing the assigned CFDA number for each award.

The definition of terms and data elements, as well as any specific instructions for reporting, including required formats, will be provided in subsequent guidance issued by HHS.

(See **Standard Terms and Conditions, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Division A Funds** as Attachment 1 at the end of this announcement.)

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Program Office Contact:

Thom Campbell
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services Operations Center
Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building
1515 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: 800-281-9519
Email: ocs@lcgnet.com

For hearing or speech impaired callers, contact the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY (Text Telephone) / ASCII (American Standard Code For Information Interchange)).

Grants Management Office Contact:

Katrina Morgan
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building
1515 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100
Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: 800-281-9519
Email: ocs@lcgnet.com

For hearing or speech impaired callers, contact the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY (Text Telephone) / ASCII (American Standard Code For Information Interchange)).

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Checklist

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

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Table of Contents	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement.	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.

Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement.	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
Project Description	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement.	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement.	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
SF-424	Referenced in Section IV.2 under "Forms" and found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
SF-424A	Referenced in Section IV.2 under "Forms" and found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
SF-424B	Referenced in Section IV.2 under "Forms" and found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.

SF-LLL	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in Section IV.2 under "Certifications" and found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html 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 employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
Letters of Support	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement under "Project Description."	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
Documentation of Non-Federal Resources	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement under "Project Description."	By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement under "Eligibility Certification."	By date of award.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement under "Certifications" and found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html	By date of award.
Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicant (voluntary)	Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the "Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants" with their applications. Applicants using a hard copy application, place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with your application package. Applicants applying electronically, please submit this survey along with your application. The Survey is referenced in Section IV.2 of the announcement under "Forms." The Survey may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html	By application due date.
This program is covered under E.O. 12372,	Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372	By application due date

<p>"Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and activities". Applicants must submit all required application materials to the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.</p>	<p>http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/ as indicated in Section IV.4 of this announcement.</p>	<p>found in Overview and Section IV.3.</p>
<p>Staff and Position Data (Staff Resume or Job Descriptions)</p>	<p>Referenced in Section IV.2. of the announcement under "Project Description."</p>	<p>By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.</p>
<p>Signed letter of agreement or MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) with the State or local office of the Corporation for National and Community Service.</p>	<p>Referenced in Section I, Section IV.2. under Approach and Third-Party Agreements, and Section V.1. Bonus Points.</p>	<p>By application due date found in Overview and Section IV.3.</p>

Date: 05/01/2009

Yolanda J. Butler, Ph.D.
Acting Director
Office of Community Services

Appendix

Attachment 1

Standard Terms and Conditions

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Division A Funds

February 26, 2009

1. Other Standard Terms and Conditions

All other grant policy terms and conditions contained in applicable Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant Policy Statements apply unless they conflict or are superseded by the following terms and conditions implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) requirements below. Recipients are responsible for contacting their HHS grant/program managers for any needed clarifications.

2. Recipient Reporting

Recipients of Federal awards from funds authorized under Division A of the ARRA must comply with all requirements specified in Division A of the ARRA (Public Law 111-5), including reporting requirements outlined in Section 1512 of the Act. For purposes of reporting, ARRA recipients must report on ARRA sub-recipient (sub-grantee and sub-contractor) activities as specified below.

Not later than 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, starting with the quarter ending June 30, 2009 and reporting by July 10, 2009, the recipient must submit quarterly reports to HHS that will be posted to Recovery.gov, containing the following information:

- a. The total amount of ARRA funds under this award;
- b. The amount of ARRA funds received under this award that were obligated and expended to projects or activities;
- c. The amount of unobligated award balances;
- d. A detailed list of all projects or activities for which ARRA funds under this award were obligated and expended, including
 - The name of the project or activity;

- A description of the project or activity;
 - An evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;
 - An estimate of the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the project or activity; and
 - For infrastructure investments made by State and local governments, the purpose, total cost, and rationale of the agency for funding the infrastructure investment with funds made available under this Act, and the name of the person to contact at the agency if there are concerns with the infrastructure investment.
- e. Detailed information on any sub-awards (sub-contracts or sub-grants) made by the grant recipient to include the data elements required to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-282).

For any sub-award equal to or larger than \$25,000, the following information:

- The name of the entity receiving the sub-award;
 - The amount of the sub-award;
 - The transaction type;
 - The North American Industry Classification System code or Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
 - Program source;
 - An award title descriptive of the purpose of each funding action;
 - The location of the entity receiving the award;
 - The primary location of performance under the award, including the city, State, congressional district, and country; and
 - A unique identifier of the entity receiving the award and of the parent entity of the recipient, should the entity be owned by another entity.
- f. All sub-awards less than \$25,000 or to individuals may be reported in the aggregate, as prescribed by HHS.
- g. Recipients must account for each ARRA award and sub-award (sub-grant and sub-contract) separately. Recipients will draw down ARRA funds on an award-specific basis. Pooling of ARRA award funds with other funds for drawdown or other purposes is not permitted.

- h. Recipients must account for each ARRA award separately by referencing the assigned CFDA number for each award.

The definition of terms and data elements, as well as any specific instructions for reporting, including required formats, will be provided in subsequent guidance issued by HHS.

3. Buy American - Use of American Iron, Steel, and Manufactured Goods

Recipients may not use any funds obligated under this award for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public building or public work unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States unless HHS waives the application of this provision. (ARRA Sec. 1605)

4. Wage Rate Requirements

[This term and condition shall not apply to tribal contracts entered into by the Indian Health Service funded with this appropriation. (ARRA Title VII - Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Facilities)]

Subject to further clarification issued by the Office of Management and Budget, and notwithstanding any other provision of law and in a manner consistent with other provisions of ARRA, all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on projects funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by and through the Federal Government pursuant to this award shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code. With respect to the labor standards specified in this section, the Secretary of Labor shall have the authority and functions set forth in Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1267; 5 U.S.C. App.) and section 3145 of title 40, United States Code. (ARRA Sec. 1606)

5. Preference for Quick Start Activities (ARRA)

In using funds for this award for infrastructure investment, recipients shall give preference to activities that can be started and completed expeditiously, including a goal of using at least 50 percent of the funds for activities that can be initiated not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of ARRA. Recipients shall also use grant funds in a manner that maximizes job creation and economic benefit. (ARRA Sec. 1602)

6. Limit on Funds (ARRA)

None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in ARRA may be used by any State or local government, or any private entity, for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course, or swimming pool. (ARRA Sec. 1604)

7. Disclosure of Fraud or Misconduct

Each recipient or sub-recipient awarded funds made available under the ARRA shall promptly refer to the HHS Office of Inspector General any credible evidence that a principal, employee, agent, contractor, sub-recipient, subcontractor, or other person has submitted a false claim under the False Claims Act or has committed a criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct involving those funds. The HHS Office of Inspector General can be reached at <http://www.oig.hhs.gov/fraud/hotline/>

8. ARRA: One-Time Funding

Unless otherwise specified, ARRA funding to existent or new awardees should be considered one-time funding.

9. Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards

Recipients agree to separately identify the expenditures for each grant award funded under ARRA on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) and the Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) required by Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations." This identification on the SEFA and SF-SAC shall include the Federal award number, the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number, and amount such that separate accountability and disclosure is provided for ARRA funds by Federal award number consistent with the recipient reports required by ARRA Section 1512(c). (2 CFR 215.26, 45 CFR 74.26, and 45 CFR 92.26)

10. Responsibilities for Informing Sub-recipients

Recipients agree to separately identify to each sub-recipient, and document at the time of sub-award and at the time of disbursement of funds, the Federal award number, any special CFDA number assigned for ARRA purposes, and amount of ARRA funds. (2 CFR 215.26, 45 CFR 74.26, and 45 CFR 92.26)