U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
1201 New York Ave. NW – Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005

NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name:	U.S. Election Assistance Commission
Funding Opportunity Title:	2010 Voting Technology and Accessibility Research—Accessible Voting Technology Initiative
Announcement Type:	Notice of Funds Availability
CFDA Number:	90.403
Application Deadline:	Tuesday, March 1, 2011, 6:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Funding Opportunity Overview

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) announces the availability of approximately $7,000,000 in grant funds for a three-year grant to fund research to identify and develop technological and administrative solutions that help ensure all citizens can vote privately and independently, a requirement of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 (42 U.S.C. §15441). This initiative will support research and development activities to increase the accessibility of new, existing, and emerging technological solutions in such areas as assistive technologies, interoperability, and design of voting systems.

EAC will award one grant in the amount of approximately $7,000,000 for activities that span up to a three-year performance period. A minimum of $5,460,000 must be used to support direct research projects. Matching fund contributions are not required, but are encouraged for this initiative.

The availability of funds in future years is contingent upon appropriations by Congress. Should additional funds be available in the future, the EAC will evaluate the grantee's progress toward agreed upon performance measures contained in this funding advisory prior to granting additional funding. The successful applicant will be an intermediary recipient that will advance this initiative through a series of competitive, targeted sub-grants. The intermediary will work closely with EAC and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) providing oversight of sub-grantee competitions, proposal reviews, awards and deliverables.

Grants will be administered under the Office of Management and Budget uniform administrative requirements and cost principles applicable to the organization that receives the assistance.

This assistance is funded under the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-8) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111-117), and authorized under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002, (Public Law 107-252, Section 271).

To be eligible for an award, an applicant must have previously received federal grant awards, or be part of an eligible partnership that meets the specific eligibility requirements described in Section III below.

Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for receipt of applications is **6:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, March 1, 2011**.

Applicants should send an e-mail by Tuesday, February 1, 2011, stating your organization's intent to apply to HAVAfunding@eac.gov. This notice of intent is not required, but it helps EAC better plan the review of applications.

EAC will host technical assistance teleconferences on November 17, 2010, and December 1, 2010, to answer questions about this funding opportunity. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one of the calls. Instructions for joining the calls are posted at the end of this *Notice*. EAC will issue an update to these instructions on www.eac.gov and www.grants.gov prior to the established dates for the calls.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) was established by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. EAC is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, adopting voluntary voting system guidelines, and serving as a national clearinghouse of information about election administration. EAC also accredits testing laboratories and certifies voting systems, as well as audits the use of HAVA funds.

In 2010, EAC is holding grant competitions to promote improvements to the administration of elections for Federal office and increase awareness of Federal elections by addressing critical issues such as research into voting technology improvements that ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities, the shortage of poll workers, and teaching young people about election processes and the importance of civic responsibility.

In FY 2009 and FY 2010, Congress provided funds to the EAC to develop an accessible voting technology research program to continue to support accessible voting technology. As a result of a series of public input sessions, including a public meeting and roundtable session with accessibility and other research experts from around the country, the EAC has decided to design this initiative for funding from the $8,000,000 appropriated by Congress for research. From the $8 million appropriation, approximately $500,000 will help to support NIST's advisory role in this effort. In addition, the EAC recently announced the Military Heroes Initiative, a $500,000 grant focused on enhancing voting processes for injured military personnel.

Through the *Accessible Voting Technology Initiative*, EAC will support research on transformative technologies and approaches to meet the critical challenge of making voting more accessible to all eligible voters. Funding will support research for: 1) promising technologies and practices; 2) technology testing and adoption; and 3) development of administrative processes and training improvements to increase accessibility of existing voting procedures and election systems. The initiative will focus on a broad spectrum of research that addresses a variety of disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

The ADA as amended defines disability as the following: "…with respect to an individual, the term "disability" means (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment" 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2); see also 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(g). A person must meet the requirements of at least one of these three criteria to be an individual with a disability under the ADA. Funds will also support the dissemination and adoption of sponsored research. Innovative solutions are required to overcome technology issues in providing accessibility to voters with disabilities in areas such as the verification of paper ballots

and official records used for recounts, the physical handling of paper ballots by voters with motor function impairments, and for the overall election system needs of voters with disabilities and voters needing minority language accessibility. The EAC also recognizes that accessibility is provided not just through the technology, but also through the processes and people that support the casting of a ballot.

In FY 2010 the *Accessible Voting Technology Initiative* will fund one intermediary recipient that will advance this initiative through a series of targeted sub-grants. The winner will, through competitive processes, invest in, support, and monitor a series of promising research initiatives**.**

The winning recipient and subsequent sub-recipients do not need to provide matching funds, although matching non-federal cash contributions are encouraged given the uncertainty of funding in subsequent fiscal years.

The successful intermediary applicant, including consortia partners, for this funding competition will possess:

1. A track record conducting or supporting rigorous technology-focused research and development;

2. The capacity to conduct a competitive process for selecting innovative sub-recipients to conduct research that will lead to effective and potentially transformative approaches to making voting systems and processes more accessible for all voters;

3. Expertise in election administration; and

4. Knowledge of disability issues and the disability community.

EAC is planning to issue only a single award; therefore, interested applicants are strongly encouraged to pursue appropriate collaborations that leverage resources and strengths needed to make this initiative successful. Applicants interested primarily in using funds to conduct research are encouraged to apply for one of numerous sub-grant awards that will be made by the intermediary organization that is awarded this grant.

All applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that include targeted research areas based on extensive input from the disability community or outline a clear process for developing the targeted research that will be supported by the sub-grants.

EAC is committed to the long-term success of this initiative which is designed to spur innovation and identify solutions.

B. Project Description

This initiative will provide a competitive grant to one organization or consortium of organizations to serve as an intermediary that will advance this initiative through an agreement with the EAC and a series of targeted sub-grants. The intermediary will select

sub-grantees through a competitive process and those proposals will support research and recommend tested improvements and innovations for making voting systems and election practices more accessible specifically for voters with disabilities and voters needing minority language accessibility, but in essence for all eligible voters. Under HAVA, the legislation requires improvements to the quality, reliability, accuracy, accessibility, affordability, and security of voting equipment, election systems, and technology. The primary functions of the recipient will be to:

1) Design a final research and development program for this initiative that includes close collaboration with EAC and its partner NIST;

2) Conduct competitive sub-grant competitions and administer those subgrants in accordance with the appropriate OMB uniform administrative guidelines (see page19);

3) Take the lead, working closely with EAC and NIST to develop funding solicitations, manage the award approval process, issue sub-grants, negotiate and oversee deliverables, coordinate usability testing of the sub-grantee's solutions, and as appropriate other issues as needed;

4) Disseminate the findings and tested recommendations from the research and support its implementation; and

5) The intermediary and sub-grantees should ensure delivery of key research and findings by early 2012 for use in the 2012 federal election.

The successful applicant must conduct a competitive sub-grant selection process after receiving the intermediary award. However, applicants may apply to the EAC with pre-selected sub-grantees provided those organizations meet the requirements set out in Section III (A) of this *Notice*, with the exception of having prior federal grant experience. While the intermediary is required to have prior federal experience, sub-grantees are not subject to the same requirement. For pre-selected sub-grantees, the EAC may request additional information regarding compliance against the criteria as described in this *Notice*.

The successful applicant must complete an initial round of the sub-grant competition within nine months of the intermediary grant being awarded. A minimum of 63% of the total budget should be awarded to sub-grantees for research. Of this amount, 40% of the total funds allocated to the sub-grantees should be obligated within the nine-month timeframe.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals that can accomplish this goal within the first six months of the grant award.

EAC will oversee and review the results of the sub-grant process for compliance and compatibility with the goals of the grant.

Sub-grants are generally to be made annually, for a performance period of up to three-years. All allocated funding must be awarded to sub-grantees within the first two years of this grant award.

Applicants for this competition may propose to conduct some direct research as well as perform intermediary functions as described in this *Notice*; however, funds for direct research by the intermediary are capped at 15% of direct costs available for research, which is $5,460,000. This is in addition to administrative and indirect costs allowed under the grant as described in Section II.

EAC, in conjunction with its Federal partner NIST, will have substantial involvement with and oversight of the intermediary organization as it carries out approved activities under this award. In particular, the EAC and NIST anticipate:

- Reviewing the sub-grant process for compliance and appropriate outcomes;

- The development of final, detailed plans for evaluation of sub-grantees including:

    o The type of research design;

    o The specific questions any evaluation(s) intends to answer;

    o The timeline and estimated budget for the sub-recipients; and

    o Selection of who will conduct the evaluations and the process to be employed to maintain independence, objectivity, and high-quality reports.

- The development of final, detailed plans for replication or expansion of sub-grantees, which will be presented to the EAC advisory committees as periodic updates;

- The development of recommendations; and

- Other appropriate activities as specified in the final award.

EAC will also have substantial involvement with the winner to support dissemination and adoption of recommendations and products developed through this grant competition.

This initiative calls for the research necessary for short and long-term solutions to provide election communities and other interested parties with data and recommendations on the voting process and technology for supporting accessibility for all voters. The winning intermediary applicant will be expected to disseminate agreed upon deliverables and tested recommendations to election officials and other interested entities at agreed upon points in time and by the end of the three year performance period.

Applicants for this *Notice* should discuss:

1. A three-year research plan and timeline that includes proposed strategies in the following areas:

    a. Define the research problem(s), identify the research hypotheses and goals, and develop a research agenda, including identifying and gathering input from key outside stakeholders;

    b. Detailed description of approach to research each of the targeted research areas;

    c. Define how the applicant will identify and gather input from key outside stakeholders;

    d. The types and sources of sub-grantees needed to carry out the research in each of the targeted research areas;

    e. Proposed staffing configuration to support the research agenda that includes expertise in U.S. local election administration and work with voters who have disabilities as defined in the ADA;

    f. Proposed staffing configuration to support the research agenda that includes expertise in U.S. local election administration and work with voters needing minority language accessibility;

    g. Create accessible electronic documentation that will present the research findings in an accessible format;

    h. Proposed staffing configuration to support the sub-grant award and administration process; and

    i. Distinctive phases of the three-year project including, but not limited to, sub-grant award process, sub-grant administration, development and testing of findings, recommendations and deliverables; and dissemination of work products.

2. The role and expertise of any consortia partners.

3. Strategies for collaboration with EAC and NIST in the approval of sub-grantee proposals, awards, deliverables, usability testing, and other areas throughout the sub-grant process.

4. Strategies to incorporate findings from the EAC's Military Heroes Initiative into this effort.

5. Strategies to identify and test new (or existing) technologies and processes associated with improving the ability of voters with disabilities to vote privately

and independently with solutions that improve the usability, accessibility, security, accuracy, reliability, and cost effectiveness.

6. Strategies for dissemination of material through websites using electronic media in accessible formats that can be customized for a user-centered focus (Section 508 conformance).

7. Strategies to identify control measures that can be used by election officials to monitor and evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of the solutions.

8. How the applicant's sub-granting process is competitive, by describing how the process will:

   a. Provide sufficient public notice of the availability of sub-grants to eligible organizations, which may include non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, disability organizations, institutions of higher education, and State government offices;

   b. Develop an extensive outreach plan that allows for stakeholder input into the final research agenda, including:

      i. What organizations are eligible for funding;

      ii. How to obtain and submit an application;

      iii. The criteria (including appropriate sub-criteria) that will be considered in reviewing applications;

      iv. Any relative percentages, weights, or other means used to distinguish among the criteria.

         a. Ensure applications will be reviewed consistently with the established criteria; and

         b. Be free from any actual conflicts of interest or the reasonable perception of any such conflict.

Applicants should discuss realistic program outcomes, appropriate to their proposals, in targeted research areas that may include:

1. Accessible verification, in a private and independent manner, which allows for integration of systems for voters with disabilities into operations for all eligible voters that focuses on ballots (polling place and mail-in) and official records used for recounts. Such verification should accommodate a variety of disabilities, including those referenced in the ADA.

2. Accessible implementation of election processes relating to Polling place and voting activities, including, but not limited to poll worker communication,

poll worker training and support, and support for vote-by-mail and early voting.

3. Research that builds upon current voting by telephone- systems to ensure the privacy, security, and integrity of the elections system, especially focusing on the analysis of new generation VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) telephones that could present visual displays of ballot information in addition to providing auditory output.

4. User centered processes and systems that address human factors to improve usability for all pollworkers and voters (with or without disabilities). These include, but are not limited to, areas such as, voter and voting systems interfaces, universal usability, navigation, ballot design and instruction language, demands on memory and cognitive abilities, audio ballot processing speed, design for wider ranges of manual dexterity, design for motorized wheelchair anthropometry, and polling place setup.

5. Assistive Technology Interfaces (ATI) that allow voters with a wide range of disabilities to use their own devices, including, but not limited to, areas such as, common interfaces and controls, standard communication protocols, and interoperability.

6. Proactive systems and results-based procedures for enhancing the technology transfer of public and private sector research and solutions into the marketplace for voters with disabilities and voters needing minority language accessibility.

7. Prize and challenge competitions led by the intermediary organization, in conjunction with the EAC, for developing voting systems, which can include, but are not limited to, machine metrics, accessible paper ballots, voting by mail access, and initiatives that foster secure, private, and independent elections for voters with disabilities and voters needing minority language accessibility.

8. Definition of the term "accessibility" and metrics for measuring improvements and their usability.

9. Research to help inform the EAC and NIST on the formation of standards on accessibility and usability as it relates to future iterations of the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines.

10. Research to discover solutions to the varying and unique challenges facing minority voters with disabilities in urban and rural environments.

11. Drawing from the Help America Vote Act Section 301 disability requirements, integration of accessible election systems for voters with disabilities into elections and polling place operations, furthering access and

allowing voters with disabilities the same opportunity for access and participation as other voters.

12. Developing methods for partnering with civic organizations, disabled advocacy groups, volunteers, and voters themselves for advice and assistance on election system access, usability, training and overall polling place assistance that facilitates voters with disabilities and voters requiring minority language accessibility as having full and equal access to the elections process.

13. Research to assist voters needing minority language accessibility in their interaction with elections systems and throughout the elections process.

14. Recommendations on additional initiatives not previously referenced in this advisory that advance election operations for voters with disabilities and voters needing minority language accessibility.

Proposed evaluation criteria for sub-grant proposals or for research proposed to be carried out directly by the intermediary applicant should, at a minimum, include:

- o A two- year research plan and timeline that includes proposed strategies, or processes for developing proposed strategies, in the following areas: How the applicant will define the research problem(s) and develop a research agenda, including identifying and gathering input from key outside stakeholders;

- o The types and sources of data needed to carryout the research;

- o Detailed description of research methodology;

- o Development of pilot and demonstration programs to generate evidence-based findings for the measures of cost/benefit and usability, including effectiveness and efficiency of the innovative designs, processes and best practices including strategies for collaboration with NIST on usability testing;

- o Proposed staffing configuration to support the research agenda that includes expertise in U.S. local election administration, work with voters with disabilities; and

- o Distinctive phases of the two-year project including, but not limited to, data gathering to include testing and review of equipment, policies and practices and election system accommodations; development of findings, recommendations and deliverables; and dissemination of work products.

- If there are consortia partners, the role and expertise of those partners.

- Possible collaborations to review and field test technological solutions based on research findings and how those partnerships will be developed.

- Strategies to identify and test new (or existing) technologies and processes associated with helping voters that have disabilities to vote privately and independently;

- Strategies to address the development of specific technical voting solutions (designed for voters with disabilities) that improve their accessibility, usability, security, reliability, accuracy, and cost effectiveness;

- Strategies to identify control measures that can be used by the military and election officials to monitor and evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of the process. The successful applicant will describe how they intend to incorporate findings from the EAC's Military Heroes Initiative into these efforts.

C. Performance Measures and Deliverables

The successful applicant for this competition should clearly describe any anticipated outcomes and deliverables associated with the role of intermediary, and, if appropriate, for any proposed direct research. They should propose performance measures or deliverables that address, but are not limited to:

1. Outreach efforts to develop detailed research agenda and investment strategy for funds made available for sub-granting purposes.

2. Anticipated number and types of sub-grant competitions to be held.

3. Dissemination of research findings, tested and effective design innovations, processes, and practices to the election communities and other interested parties.

4. Accessible documentation and material designed with a user-centered focus (Section 508 conformance).

Performance measures and deliverables for direct research should address, but are not limited to:

1. Mapping of the existing processes and the grantee-recommended process flow. The mapping should address the personnel and technology requirements necessary to implement the recommended processes in addition to control measures to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the process;

2. Analysis of the research findings (e.g. illustrating the accessibility, usability, effectiveness, efficiencies, and cost benefits of the innovations to election system designs, processes, and best practices);

3. Recommendations, from evidence based findings, for innovative designs, modifications to existing election systems, guidelines, tools, and practices to support more accessible, usable, secure, efficient, and effective voting processes;

4. Accessible documentation and material designed with a user-centered focus (Section 508 conformance).

D. Authority

Support for the activities described in this *Notice* is authorized under Title II, Part 3 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (42 USC §§ 15441 – 15443). Funding for the awards made under this *Notice* will be provided from appropriations made available under the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-8) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111-117).

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type: Competitive Grant

Anticipated Total Funding: $7,000,000

Anticipated Number of New Awards: 1

Maximum Amount of Award(s): up to $7,000,000

Minimum on Individual Award Amounts: N/A

Matching funds: Not required, but encouraged

Limits on Costs for Intermediary and Sub-grantees

Direct Costs for Administrative Support for the Intermediary (Prime Grantee): up to 17% of total costs

Indirect Costs for Intermediary (Prime Grantee): up to 5% of direct costs

Costs for Direct Research by Intermediary (Prime Grantee): up to 15% of the total direct costs available for research ($5,460,000)

Funds for Sub-grantees for Direct Research: minimum of 63% of total costs

Indirect Costs for Sub-grantees: up to 5% of the sub-grantee's direct costs

Performance Period: Up to 36 Months

A. Number of Awards and Award Amount

EAC plans to make one award under this *Notice*. EAC is not restricted to this projection and may deviate from the number of awards and amounts stated in this *Notice* at its sole discretion.

B. Funding Instrument, Award Period and Future Funding

The successful applicant will receive a three-year program grant, with operating funds up to $7,000,000 for the duration of the three-year grant. Future funds beyond the first three-years are subject to EAC priorities and availability of appropriated funds.

C. Other Requirements/Limitations

Grantee may not use any part of an award from the EAC to fund religious instruction, worship or proselytizing, voter registration, voting, get out the vote (GOTV) drives or other political activities that could be construed as lobbying.

Project funds must be used for tasks and activities carried out without partisan bias and without promoting any particular political point of view regarding any election issue or candidates.

Pre-award costs can be requested by applicants approved for funding under this *Notice*, but are subject to approval from EAC per U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines.

Expenditures for building construction are not allowed under this program.

Grantee may recover indirect costs under this grant up to 5 percent of the total Federal share of the grant. If an applicant has an approved Federal indirect cost rate, the remainder of the indirect costs can be used as a matching contribution. Applicants without an approved indirect rate may not claim indirect costs as a matching contribution.

Grantee may recover direct costs for the administrative management of this award up to 17% of the total Federal share of the grant. Competitive applicants will seek ways of minimizing administrative costs associated with the grant.

Grantee may perform direct research under this grant for up to 15% of the total direct costs available for research, which is $5,460,000.

Current and previous EAC grantees must be current on all reporting requirements in order to receive an award under this competition.

Applicants requiring human subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval must include a plan for such approval. IRB approval must be readily attainable within eight weeks of informal notification of recommendation for award to ensure continued processing for funding. There are three basic options for human subjects review and approval: 1) establish your own IRB (see Office of Human Rights Protection (OHRP) at Health and Human Services (HHS) http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/index.html#registernew); 2) use the review board of a (usually local) university or research institution, either via consultants to the project, a project subcontract, or directly through the applicant's own contacts; or 3) use a commercial service.

D. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required for this competition, but is encouraged.

E. Application Selection Criteria

In awarding grants under this *Notice*, EAC will consider:

- Program/Research Design (50%)

- Organizational Capacity (30%)

- Budget/Cost Effectiveness (20%)

1. Program Design/Strategy

EAC will consider the quality of the proposed design based on:

a) The soundness, relevance, innovation, and detail of the applicant's three-year research plan;

b) The scope of the research project including the estimated number of sub-grantees required to perform the research, potential sources for those sub-grantees, the targeted areas for research, and the populations that may benefit from the resultant findings;

c) The applicant's approach and expertise in measuring achievement of outcomes and using innovative solutions to improve accessibility, usability, security, accuracy, privacy and independence specifically for voters with disabilities, but also for all voters and pollworkers;

d) The quality of the proposed collaboration with EAC and NIST on sub-grant proposal approvals, usability testing, and in other areas throughout the sub-grant process;

e) The outreach and communication strategies to the disability and minority language accessibility communities to help ensure a comprehensive research agenda and recommendations. These should take into account the accessibility standards and effective practices already developed and in use in some jurisdictions; and

f) Strategy for applying research results to successful outcomes in the marketplace and throughout all aspects of the voting process.

2. Organizational Capacity

EAC will consider the capacity of the applicant to deliver the proposed services based on:

a) Relevant experience managing grants in an efficient and cost-effective manner;

b) Relevant experience and expertise in awarding and administering sub-grants in an efficient and cost-effective manner;

c) Expertise in the areas of accessibility, usability, and security;

d) Relevant experience of the organization and staff in research design and implementation, election administration, and working with organizations and populations with a broad range of disabilities as evidenced by brief staff biographies (or position descriptions if staff for this project is not yet identified) and past organizational success;

e) Demonstrated ability to manage a complex research agenda in close partnership with a cognizant federal agency; and

f) Experience of the organization and staff in developing and advancing critical solutions to complex research issues.

3. Budget/Cost Effectiveness

EAC will consider the budget based on:

a) Cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities in relation to the scope of the project; and

b) Clarity and completeness of the budget and budget narrative including staffing levels that support the program design.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for this *Notice*'s grant award, an applicant must:

- Be an existing grant-making institution or partner with one, or have a credible plan to develop and support a sub-granting process;

- Have a strong track record of using rigorous criteria to select, invest in, support, and monitor the replication and expansion of grantees;

- Have a well-articulated plan to:

  o Replicate and expand research-proven initiatives that have been shown to produce sizable, sustained benefits to participants or society; and/or

  o Collaborate with a research organization to undertake rigorous evaluations to assess the effectiveness of initiatives.

- Have appropriate policies on conflicts of interest, self-dealing, and other improper practices;

- Have demonstrated expertise in the election administration field, including work with voters with disabilities, and creating accessible electronic documentation; and

- Have demonstrated experience in either funding or successfully designing and implementing research projects.

All applications that are developed jointly by more than one organization must identify only one organization as the lead organization and the official applicant.

EAC will conduct initial reviews of applications to determine whether they meet these specific eligibility criteria.

Applications that meet all the eligibility criteria discussed in Section III (A) of this *Notice* will be reviewed in full. In its full evaluations, the EAC will consider and weigh how the applications address all the stated criteria.

EAC will make an award only after determining that an organization meets all the eligibility criteria. As necessary, the EAC will further evaluate an applicant during clarifying discussions (and possible site visits) with applicants. EAC also anticipates conducting due diligence reviews to assess or confirm information or assurances provided by applicants.

As part of these further discussions and reviews, the EAC may conclude that applicants do not meet one or more of the eligibility requirements. In that case, the EAC will not further consider the application.

B. Other Eligibility Requirements

Lobbying: Any organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Submission of Application Package

This *Notice* contains all application instructions needed to complete the application. This *Notice* is available at: www.eac.gov, or may be viewed at http://www.grants.gov.

B. Submission Dates, Times and Instructions

The deadline for receipt of applications is 6:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, March 1, 2011.

Please submit an e-mail stating your *intent to apply* to HAVAfunding@eac.gov by Tuesday, February 1, 2011. This notice of intent is not required, but helps EAC better plan the review of applications.

Applications should be submitted via e-mail and must arrive by the 6 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, March 1, 2011. Multiple attachments in the email are

allowed. Microsoft Word or PDF format is required. Submit applications to
HAVAfunding@eac.gov. Applications submitted by fax will not be accepted.

As an alternative to e-mailing the application, applicants may submit a hard copy application via U.S. Postal Service, overnight carrier, or hand delivery to the address below. Submit one unbound, single-sided paper application and an electric version of your application on disk or CD. The electronic version of the application must be an exact duplicate of the paper original. If there are differences between the paper application and the disk or CD, EAC will use the electronic version.

Submit applications to:

U. S. Election Assistance Commission
1201 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005

Late applications: Applications received after the deadline date and time are considered late and will not be reviewed. EAC will notify each late applicant that the application will not be considered in the current competition.

Extension of deadlines: EAC may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of mail service. Determinations to extend or waive deadline requirements rest with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. **If extended, the new deadline will be posted at www.eac.gov and at www.grants.gov.**

C. Form and Content of Submissions

The applicant must provide a well-designed plan with a clear and compelling justification for awarding the requested funds. The narratives must cover the three-year project period.

Note: No additional information beyond what is requested in this section will be accepted with this application. Letters of support as evidence of partnerships are not allowed at the time of application, but may be requested by EAC during the review process. Applicants should describe in careful detail the nature of their partnerships and how those partnerships will advance the goals of the project in the application narrative.

The maximum length for the Executive Summary (Project Abstract) is 3,000 characters (not including spaces). The maximum combined length for the Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Budget/Cost Effectiveness is 25,000 characters (approximately 18 double-spaced pages, not including spaces). The application must be typed and double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins.

Applications that are incomplete or exceed the mandatory character count limitations will be found out of compliance and will not be reviewed for this competition.

The application consists of the following components in the following order:

1. Standard Form SF424 (R & R)

2. Project Abstract (maximum length: 3,000 characters)

3. Research and Related Other Project Information Form

4. Project/Performance Site Location(s)

5. Key Project Personnel

6. Research and Related Budget

7. Budget Narrative

8. Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B, Rev. 7-97)

9. Project Narrative Statement: (maximum length for narrative: 25,000 characters)

    a. Research Design

    b. Organizational Capacity

    c. Budget/Cost Effectiveness

10. Certification on Lobbying

    http://www.eac.gov/program-areas/grants/certification-regarding-lobbying/

Copies of all application forms can be found at:
http://www.eac.gov/payments_and_grants/federal_standard_forms.aspx

Should there be any inconsistency between this *Notice* and the application content instructions below, the order of precedence is as follows:

    1. *Notice*

    2. Application Instructions

1. **Abstract Narrative**

    Provide a concise overview of the proposed project that summarizes the need, the proposed strategy for addressing the need, anticipated outcomes/accomplishments and how the outcomes will be achieved and measured.

2. **Program Design Narrative**

   a. **Background.** Briefly describe your organization's mission, accomplishments, and beneficiaries. Describe in detail the community and need(s) your project will address.

   b. **Research Design/Plan.** Your research plan and strategy should address information discussed in Section I.B of this *Notice* and generally:

      i. How your approach and research agenda is innovative and why it will be successful;

      ii. The extent to which the implementation of the proposed program will address and balance such factors as overall cost, effectiveness, and practicability within time constraints such as certification;

      iii. What the expected outcomes are, and how they will be measured;

      iv. The extent to which the proposed program will generate the necessary documentation to be used or replicated by election officials and other interested parties, and the quality of the plan to for transferring technology and processes to jurisdictions; and

      v. How well it supports transparency and citizens' ability to observe and confirm election processes and outcomes.

   c. **Community Resources.** Describe your strategy to secure previously untapped sources of private funds to build your program, including how you will use existing community resources including State and local election offices to implement your approach.

   d. **Dissemination Efforts.** Describe the strategy for disseminating research findings and implementing innovative technological solutions.

3. **Organizational Capacity**

   a. **Program Management and Oversight.** Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has to manage the program proposed in this application.

      • Who are the key staff members responsible for program oversight?

      • How will the successful applicant work with the EAC and NIST to ensure overall program oversight as previously referenced in this advisory;

      • Experience of the organization and staff as evidenced by brief staff biographies and other past organizational successes.

- Detail the responsibilities of each key staff member and indicate if it is a new proposed position or a position already in place.

- Ability to manage a Federal grant as evidenced by previous grants experience or other capabilities.

- Ability to award and administer a sub-grant as evidenced by previous sub-grant awarding and administration experience or other capabilities.

- Demonstrated relationships/partnerships with relevant State or local government entities needed to make the project successful.

b. **Fiscal Oversight.** Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has managing Federal grant funding or other funding.

- What is your current overall organizational budget and what percentage of the budget would this grant represent?

- How will you ensure that the fiscal management is compliant with Federal requirements?

- Who are the key staff members responsible for fiscal oversight?

- Detail the responsibilities of each of those key staff members.

4. **Budget/Cost-Effectiveness**

a. **Budget and Program Design.** Explain how the proposed program budget reflects the program's goals and design, including the cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities in relation to the scope of the project.

b. **Program Sustainability.** Describe how the research, findings and recommendations of this research can be used beyond the period of the grant.

c. **Cost Sharing Sources.** Detail the amounts and sources for any proposed non-Federal cash matching funds for the grant. Identify the amounts and sources of any cash or in-kind contributions to this project. Cost share is not required for this grant competition.

5. **Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications.** Carefully read the authorization, assurances, and certifications and sign and return them with your application.

6. **Performance Measurements.** EAC will hold the grantee accountable for achieving the approved performance measures during the period of the grant. Performance measures must cover the proposed performance period of the grant, up to 36-months.

7. **Budget.** The budget should be sufficient to perform the tasks described in the proposal narrative for the entire grant period. Do not include unexplained amounts,

miscellaneous, contingency costs, or unallowable expenses such as entertainment costs. Round all figures to the nearest dollar. Refer to the Federal cost principles at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars for information on allowable costs in Federal grants.

D. Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on the Standard Form 424. The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the Federal government improve statistical reports on Federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number (EIN). DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com.

The website indicates a 24-hour email turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by telephone at a cost of $99 by calling the DUNS number request line. Applications without DUNS numbers or with invalid DUNS numbers are subject to potential rejection.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

F. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable OMB Cost Principles (see 2 C.F.R. Part 220 (A-21), 230 (A-122), and FAR 31.2, which can be found at the following website: www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/ .

V. Application Review Information

All proposals will be first submitted to a compliance review for eligibility. All applications in compliance with this *Notice* and the application instructions will be advanced for programmatic review. EAC staff will review all qualified proposals using the selection criteria described in Section II of this *Notice*. An outside peer review process may be used at EAC's discretion. During the staff review process, EAC staff may request additional supporting documentation from the applicant.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices

EAC anticipates announcing selections in May 2011.

EAC staff will work with the selected applicants to clarify and finalize their application prior to the grant award. During this negotiation period, any issues or questions identified during

the review of the application must be satisfactorily resolved before a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be issued. The agreement will also include the standard terms and conditions, general terms and conditions (if any), and special award conditions (if any) that are applicable.

To obtain grant funds, grantees will be required to submit a SF 270, *Request for Advance or Reimbursement*, to EAC.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The applicable regulations and other specific conditions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also incorporates your approved application and budget as part of your binding commitments under this grant. The award recipient must comply with the following requirements:

1. Access for Persons with Disabilities. All grant recipients will ensure that all training and technical assistance services and resources including web sites are accessible to persons with disabilities, as required by law.

2. Financial Management Systems. Applicants selected for funding must comply with the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. § 7501-07), if the applicant expends $500,000 or more in Federal awards in its most recent fiscal year. Documentation must include certification that the applicant maintains internal controls over Federal awards; complies with applicable laws; regulations and contract or grant provisions; and prepares appropriate financial statements; or submits the most recent audit by the applicant's independent public accountant.

3. Use of Materials. To ensure that materials generated with EAC funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and sub-grantees, EAC reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the agreement, including data, and to authorize others to do so. The grantee must agree to make such publications and materials available to the public at no cost or at the cost of reproduction through the EAC's clearinghouse. All materials developed with EAC funds by grantees must be accessible to individuals with disabilities to the extent required by law.

4. All intellectual property related to inventions and patents developed by the successful applicant is covered by 35 U.S.C. § 200 *et seq*.

C. Reports and Other Requirements

1. Performance Measurement and Accountability

EAC is committed to accountability and to measuring the performance of all of its grantees. The award recipient for this competition must identify the critical outcomes of their work, indicators of success in this work, and how progress can be judged or

measured. The recipient will be required to report annually on agreed upon performance measures. EAC may also require an independent assessment of grantee performance.

2. Reporting Requirements

Progress Report. Annual reports are due October 31 for the period ending September 30. The reports must include:

- Budget report for the completed budget period;

- Narrative analysis of the budget report, explaining differences between budgeted and actual activities and costs by funding source;

- Achievements as related to performance measurements; and

- Discussion of any problems observed or experienced and solutions implemented.

Financial Reports. Federal Financial Report SF 425 (FFR) must be submitted annually by October 31 for the period ending September 30. A final FFR is due 30 days after the end of the project period.

3. Other data collection requirements

The award recipient must:

a) Submit copies of all curricula, handouts, and other materials developed to EAC's clearinghouse.

b) As directed, use EAC's logo for materials produced.

c) Meet as necessary with appropriate EAC staff or EAC designees to review work plans and budgets, monitor progress and exchange ideas and information.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice,* contact:

Debbie Chen or Patrick Leahy
U. S. Election Assistance Commission
1201 New York Avenue, N.W. Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 566-3100
E-mail: HAVAfunding@eac.gov.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Two technical assistance calls have been scheduled to answer applicant questions about this competition. EAC is researching the best option for accessible call conferencing and will release call in details as they become available at www.eac.gov and www.grants.gov.

1. **Event address for attendees:** https://eacevents.webex.com/eacevents/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=668917526

Date and time:	Wednesday, November 17, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (New York, GMT-05:00)
Duration:	1 hour 30 minutes
Event number:	668 917 526
Event password:	voting
	Call-in toll-free number (US/Canada) 1-866-699-3239 Call-in toll number (US/Canada) 1-408-792-6300 Toll-free dialing restrictions

2. **Event address for attendees:** https://eacevents.webex.com/eacevents/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=663759286

Date and time:	Wednesday, December 1, 2010, time to be determined Eastern Standard Time (New York, GMT-05:00)
Duration:	1 hour 30 minutes
Event number:	663 759 286
Event password:	voting
Teleconference:	Call-in toll-free number (US/Canada) 1-866-699-3239 Call-in toll number (US/Canada) 1-408-792-6300 Toll-free dialing restrictions

Public Burden Statement: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the EAC to inform all potential persons who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)). This collection is approved under OMB Control #: 4040-0001, 4040-0003, and 4040-0010 (Expiration Date: 6/30/2011, 9/30/2011, and 8/31/2011).
Dated: 10/13/2010