



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Policy Development and Research

Alternative Methods For Calculating Fair Market Rents (FMRs) in Rental Markets With Rapidly
Rising Rents
FR-6400-N-60
07/27/2020

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Overview | 3 |
| I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION..... | 3 |
| A. Program Description. | 3 |
| B. Authority. | 13 |
| II. Award Information..... | 14 |
| A. Available Funds | 14 |
| B. Number of Awards..... | 14 |
| C. Minimum/Maximum Award Information | 14 |
| D. Period of Performance..... | 14 |
| E. Type of Funding Instrument..... | 14 |
| F. Supplementation..... | 14 |
| III. Eligibility Information..... | 14 |
| A. Eligible Applicants..... | 15 |
| B. Ineligible Applicants..... | 15 |
| C. Cost Sharing or Matching..... | 15 |
| D. Threshold Eligibility Requirements..... | 15 |
| E. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Affecting Eligibility..... | 15 |
| F. Program-Specific Requirements Affecting Eligibility..... | 16 |
| G. Criteria for Beneficiaries..... | 16 |
| IV. Application and Submission Information..... | 16 |
| A. Obtaining an Application Package..... | 16 |
| B. Content and Form of Application Submission..... | 17 |
| C. System for Award Management (SAM) and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number..... | 19 |
| D. Application Submission Dates and Times..... | 19 |
| E. Intergovernmental Review..... | 22 |
| F. Funding Restrictions..... | 22 |
| G. Other Submission Requirements..... | 23 |
| V. Application Review Information..... | 24 |
| A. Review Criteria..... | 24 |
| B. Review and Selection Process..... | 28 |
| VI. Award Administration Information..... | 29 |
| A. Award Notices..... | 29 |

B. Administrative, National and Department Policy Requirements for HUD recipients30
C. Reporting.....30
D. Debriefing.31
VII. Agency Contact(s).....32
VIII. Other Information.....32
APPENDIX.....33

Program Office:

Policy Development and Research

Funding Opportunity Title:

Alternative Methods For Calculating Fair Market Rents (FMRs) in Rental Markets With Rapidly Rising Rents

Funding Opportunity Number:

FR-6400-N-60

Primary CFDA Number:

14.536

Due Date for Applications:

07/27/2020

Overview

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issues this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to invite applications from eligible applicants for the program and purpose described within this NOFA. Prospective applicants should carefully read all instructions in all sections to avoid sending an incomplete or ineligible application. HUD funding is highly competitive. Failure to respond accurately to any submission requirement could result in an incomplete or noncompetitive proposal.

During the selection process HUD is prohibited from disclosing 1) information regarding any applicant’s relative standing, 2) the amount of assistance requested by an applicant, and 3) any information contained in the application. Prior to the application deadline, HUD may not disclose the identity of any applicant or the number of applicants that have applied for assistance.

For Further Information Regarding this NOFA: Please direct questions regarding the specific requirements of this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to the office contact identified in Section VII.

OMB Approval Number(s):

2528-0299

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION.

A. Program Description.

1. Purpose

Through this NOFA, HUD is announcing the availability of \$500,000 for a study of alternative methods for calculating Fair Market Rents (FMRs) in rental markets with rapidly rising rents. HUD is soliciting proposals for research that will accomplish the following:

1. Define “rental markets with rapidly rising rents”
2. Identify alternative calculations to generate FMRs that more closely track market conditions in rapidly rising rental markets than current methods. This may include, but is not limited to, alternative sources of gross rent data and/or alternative calculation methodologies using existing data.

Background

FMRs are primarily used to determine payment standard amounts for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. Public housing agencies (PHAs), the local administrators of the HCV program, set payment standards that are used to calculate the value of the housing subsidy for each voucher family. FMRs are gross rent estimates; they include the shelter rent plus the cost of all necessary utilities, but do not include telephones, cable or satellite television service, and internet service. HUD sets FMRs to assure that a sufficient supply of rental housing is available to program participants. To accomplish this objective, FMRs must be both high enough to permit a selection of units and neighborhoods and low enough to serve as many low-income families as possible. In general, the FMR for an area is the amount that would be needed to pay the gross rent of privately owned, decent, and safe rental housing of a modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities and is typically set at the 40th percentile of the distribution of gross rents. HUD's FMR calculations represent HUD's best effort to estimate the 40th percentile gross rent paid by recent movers into standard quality units in each FMR area.

HUD also uses the FMRs in a variety of other program applications, such as to determine initial renewal rents for some expiring project-based Section 8 contracts, initial rents for the Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy program, rent ceilings for the HOME Investment Partnerships program and the Emergency Solutions Grants program, to calculate the maximum award amount and adjustments for Continuum of Care projects, and calculation of flat rents in Public Housing units.

HUD annually estimates FMRs for more than 600 metropolitan areas and nearly 2,000 nonmetropolitan county areas. By law, the final FMRs for use in any fiscal year (FY) must be effective at the start of the fiscal year, October 1, and must be posted for at least thirty (30) days before becoming effective.

Section 8(c)(1) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 requires HUD to calculate FMRs annually based "on the most recent available data" (42 USC 1437f). HUD's current calculation of FMRs may be broken down into 3 components:

1. A measure of gross rent paid for standard quality rental units occupied by recent movers
2. An inflation adjustment
3. A trend factor

Each of these components is described in detail in a recent HUD report to Congress titled "Proposals to Update the Fair Market Rent Formula" available at:

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/Proposals-To-Update-the-Fair-Market-Rent-Formula.html>

Congress has expressed interest in the continued improvement of the calculation of FMRs. Specifically, the Senate Committee on Appropriations report (S. Rept. 116-109) accompanying the Act included the following concern:

"The Committee is concerned that where there is a significant fluctuation in local rental market conditions, HUD's published fair market rents do not reflect the increased need in rental subsidy and the associated operating costs. As a result, some PHAs are conducting independent market surveys to more accurately reflect local market conditions for HUD's review and consideration. However, some rental market surveys can be costly and an unviable option for PHAs that lack

the expertise and capacity. This is particularly true for smaller PHAs in markets where the local fair market rents are outpacing HUD’s annual determination of FMRs.” S. Rept. 116-109

To help HUD address these concerns, Congress provided \$500,000 for HUD to study alternative methods for calculating FMRs in rental markets with rapidly rising rents.

Requests for Proposals

Due to the importance of accurate FMRs for HUD program operations, applicants are asked to develop proposals that describe innovative research approaches that will address the project objectives described in this NOFA. This approach should provide findings and informational resources that may be used to guide HUD in making future changes to the manner in which FMRs are calculated.

In developing research proposals in response to this NOFA, there are several existing resources that HUD expects applicants to review:

- The current methods used to calculate Fair Market Rents, available at: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#2020_documents, including recent method improvements involving local area forecasting in the trend factor calculation
- HUD’s recent report titled “Proposals to Update the Fair Market Rent Formula” available at: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/Proposals-To-Update-the-Fair-Market-Rent-Formula.html>
- A recent research study titled “Deriving Local Trend Factors for Fair Market Rent Estimation”, available at: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/deriving-local-trends-factors.pdf>; and
- A GAO report titled “HUD Can Improve Its Process for Estimating Fair Market Rents” available at: <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-05-342>

HUD anticipates that successful proposals will incorporate alternative data sources as well as alternative methods to those currently used.

Methodological Considerations

There are statutory and regulatory requirements governing the calculation of Fair Market Rents. For example, Section 8(c)(1) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 requires HUD, at 42 U.S.C. 1437f, to use the most recent data available when calculating FMRs and the regulations at 24 C.F.R. 888.1113 require HUD to set FMRs at the 40th percentile of the distribution of gross rents paid for standard quality rental housing units within the FMR area occupied by recent movers. In addition to the codified requirements, HUD is expected to provide as much transparency into the calculations of FMRs as possible. Toward that end, applicants should be mindful that any solutions offered which recommend alternative sources of data to those already

used by the Department must be publicly available free of charge, or must be able to be publicly released as part of the terms put in place to acquire such data. Similarly, since HUD is expected to document all calculations made in the FMR process, calculations and other transformation methods should be transparent. Consequently, machine learning techniques or other “black box” transformations without adequate explanations are less likely to be incorporated into future FMR calculations. Finally, due to the ever-changing nature of metropolitan area boundaries, HUD recommends that applicants focus their efforts on alternative methods for calculating FMRs with the current set of HUD-defined FMR areas.

Scope of Research

Congress placed specific emphasis on alternative methods for calculating FMRs in areas with rapidly rising rents. However, applicants are encouraged to test the robustness of their solutions on housing markets in equilibrium and on markets where rents may be sharply declining as well. Rapidly rising rents have occurred in all types of market areas including small nonmetropolitan FMR areas, large metropolitan areas, and areas in between. Therefore, the alternative methods must be applicable to a range of rental market sizes.

Solutions that encourage HUD to begin its own primary rental data collection are discouraged as this would be prohibitively expensive and potentially a duplicative use of federal resources and unlikely to provide meaningful changes to HUD’s current methods.

Applicants need to be mindful that in metropolitan areas, HUD must calculate both a metropolitan area-wide Fair Market Rent as well as Small Area Fair Market Rents, which are FMRs calculated for ZIP codes within metropolitan areas. Within the narrative of their proposals, applicants should address how alternative methods for calculating FMRs may be applied to metropolitan area-wide FMRs and Small Area FMRs.

Project Description

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this project is to identify better methods for calculating FMRs for markets in disequilibrium where rents are rising rapidly and FMRs calculated using current methods coupled with current payment standard authority are insufficient to enable Housing Choice Voucher families to find and lease suitable units within the search time allowed. In addition to the primary objective, this research should consider whether the alternative calculation methods should be applied to the calculation of Fair Market Rents in all types of housing markets.

Research Questions

Applicants should propose research projects that attempt to address one or more of the following research questions. HUD expects the most competitive proposals will cover multiple research objectives.

- What criteria should be used to define a housing market with rapidly rising rents?
- What criteria should be used to evaluate which alternative methods are better than current methods?
- Under what conditions should HUD implement the alternative method for calculating Fair Market Rents, and at what point are the alternative methods no longer needed?
- What data should HUD use to calculate Fair Market Rents in housing markets with rapidly rising rents that HUD currently is not using?
- Beyond alternative sources of data, what calculation techniques should HUD use when calculating Fair Market Rents in markets with rapidly rising rents and/or more generally?
- For metropolitan areas, how do the alternative methods for calculating Fair Market Rents change the calculation of metropolitan area wide FMRs as well as Small Area FMRs?

Methodological Frameworks

For analysis of quantitative data, the applicant should explore data sources that are publicly available, free or licensed to HUD, and can be republished by HUD for the purposes of explaining the methodology publicly. If the applicant proposes use of (third) 3rd party data that is neither free nor licensed to HUD, the applicant must quantify in their application the comparative advantage of using the data source instead of publicly available alternatives.

The applicant shall include a literature review that informs the inclusion of relevant variables and data source alternatives and describes the relative strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches.

HUD encourages applicants to be creative in presenting methodologies for calculating FMRs, but also stresses that findings at each step of the calculation process should be replicable and explainable to non-technical audiences.

Finally, applicants should test their alternative calculations using retrospective data to determine how often the new method would produce ex ante FMR estimates that fall within the basic payment standard range (90% to 110%) of the actual ex post rent measurements.

Eligible Activities

In support of the project objectives listed above, you are required to undertake a variety of research and evaluation activities, from articulating research questions to conducting the research itself, culminating in communicating research findings and producing informational guidance and resources that improve the calculations of FMRs in housing markets with rapidly rising rents. HUD expects to receive a set of alternatively calculated FMRs for these areas along with comparisons to current FMR calculations and the evaluation of the alternatively calculated rents.

HUD considers the activities listed below to be essential in creating and completing the project in a manner that achieves its objectives. This list is not comprehensive.

- a. Research design and work plan development: Developing a research design and a work plan that will effectively respond to the research goals identified in this NOFA. The development of these materials will be done in close consultation with the HUD Government Technical Representative (GTR), Government Technical Monitor (GTM), and/or other staff and experts as the HUD GTR directs. This activity should include:
 - Identifying key research questions and explaining their significance;
 - Conducting a literature review;
 - Consulting with outside experts and stakeholders to include the consideration of creating an expert panel to review any alternative methods suggested;
 - Developing a research design, which should include research questions, hypotheses, data sources, data acquisition strategies (if necessary), and analysis methods;
 - Developing a work plan, which should include staffing assignments, task budgets, and a timeline of key activities; and
 - Completing OMB Paperwork Reduction Act, Privacy Impact Assessment, and System of Record Notification documentation, as applicable.
- b. Data Acquisition: This work may include the procurement or collection of data needed to estimate FMRs.
- c. Data Analysis: Merging, tabulating, analyzing, modeling, validating and presenting data from existing and newly acquired sources to answer the research questions. Such analysis may include descriptive statistics, advanced statistical analysis, geospatial analysis, and data visualization business intelligence reporting and dashboard systems as appropriate to present the data.
- d. Alternative Calculation of FMRs: This work draws upon items a), b), and c) to calculate an alternative set of FMRs to those already calculated by the Department. This work should also provide the appropriate comparisons to currently calculated FMRs and Small Area FMRs along with the quantification of the improvements made by the alternative calculation methods.
- e. Risk/Benefit analysis of adopting a change in FMR methodology.
- f. Synthesize and communicate findings through briefings, presentations, written reports, and the production of informational guidance and resources. These are to be designed to effectively communicate findings to non-research audiences specializing in policy, budgeting, urban planning, community development, and other affordable housing practitioners at the State or local level.
- g. Other Eligible Activities could include: Developing short papers or policy briefs on specific findings of the research that could guide decision-makers at the Federal, State and local levels.

Deliverables

At a minimum, HUD expects you to produce the following deliverables. The GTR and/or other HUD staff as assigned by the GTR will work closely with you to define these deliverables. HUD expects to have an opportunity to review and comment to ensure that they meet the project objectives.

- a. **Management and Work Plan:** The Management and Work Plan will outline the overall strategy for completing the research within the budget and time frame allotted. It will describe activities to be undertaken, assign staff and level of effort, and provide a schedule of key tasks. A draft Management and Work Plan must be submitted with the application. After award, HUD will provide feedback to the awardee, and a final Management and Work Plan must be submitted to HUD within two weeks of the receipt of HUD comments.
- b. **Research Design:** The Research Design will provide a detailed plan for technical aspects of the research, including research questions, hypotheses, data sources, data acquisition methods, and analysis methods. The Research Design must demonstrate how the proposed methodology, including the data acquisition strategy, will address the research questions and hypotheses proposed. A draft Research Design must be submitted with the application. After award, HUD will provide feedback to the grantee, with a final Research Design to be submitted to HUD within four weeks of the receipt of HUD comments.
- c. **Quality Control Plan (QCP):** A draft QCP which addresses all potential points of a Quality Control Lapse shall be delivered within two weeks after grant award and the final QCP shall be submitted for GTR approval within six weeks of grant award. Three copies of a comprehensive written QCP shall be submitted to the GTR and within five working days when changes are made thereafter. After acceptance of the QCP by the GTR, the awardee shall receive the GTR's acceptance in writing of any proposed change to its quality control system.
- d. **Monthly Progress Reports:** Progress reports will document activities completed in the most recent reporting period, planned activities for the upcoming reporting period, and budget expenditures by line item (including hours worked for specific staff). Progress reports must be submitted monthly and should be aligned with the submission of draw down requests.
- e. **Retrospective Reports:** The Retrospective Reports will document the complete findings from the research effort; summarize the work conducted over the course of the project; and present the study objectives, data sources, analysis methods, and results with specific emphasis on the comparisons to currently calculated FMRs and Small Area FMRs including the quantification of the improvements made by the alternative calculation methods. A series of Interim Retrospective Reports will be submitted over the course of the period of performance of this project and provide a summary of the project findings up to that point. The Interim Retrospective Reports should be considered an opportunity to evaluate the state of the project and for HUD to provide feedback on the study's approach and documentation. If applicable, the Interim Retrospective Reports may be subject to sharing among divisions within HUD. Further, should the applicant determine that an expert panel be part of the review process, time should be built into the work plan to ensure the expert panel reviews the Interim Retrospective Reports and that comments

on the interim reports be included into the awardee's ongoing analysis. The exact deadline and content of the Interim Retrospective Reports will be decided between the GTR and the awardee. A Final Retrospective Report will serve as a stand-alone document that meets the overall objective of this project. The Final Retrospective Report, following HUD's review of the draft final report, should be edited and prepared for publication in accordance with HUD's Guidelines for Preparing a Report for Publication (<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/About/style-guide-for-reports.pdf>).

- f. Data and Analytical Programs: You may use any analytical software package that you prefer to complete your analysis; however, HUD's production tool for calculating FMRs is SAS Software; therefore, HUD requires that you provide any analytical programs in the SAS programming language and that any data used in these efforts be provided in SAS datasets or other format that may be read using the SAS Software.
- g. One to two-page plain language summary of findings appropriate for non-technical audience.
- h. Policy Implications Briefing: Publishable brief and presentation targeted to policymakers and practitioners on how the findings of the study may impact the calculation of FMRs and the impacts on program operations.

2. Changes from Previous NOFA.

This is a new NOFA

3. Definitions.

a. Standard Definitions

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). The obligation to affirmatively further the purposes and policies of the Fair Housing Act.

Assistance Listings (formerly CFDA) is a directory of the various Federal listings, projects, services and activities offering financial and non-financial assistance and benefits to the American public. An Assistance Listing (CFDA) Number is the unique number assigned to each program, project, service or activity listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA).

Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) is the person authorized to submit applications on behalf of the organization via Grants.gov. The AOR is authorized by the E-Biz point of contact in the System for Award Management. The AOR is listed in item 21 on the SF-424.

Award, as used in this NOFA means a federal grant OR cooperative agreement as specified in Section II.E (Type of Funding Instrument).

Consolidated Plan is a document developed by states and local jurisdictions. This plan is completed by engaging in a participatory process to assess their affordable housing and community development needs and market conditions, and to make data-driven, place-based investment decisions with funding from formula grant programs. (See 24 CFR part 91 for more information about the Consolidated Plan and related Action Plan).

Contract means a legal instrument by which a non-Federal entity purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a Federal award. The term as used in this NOFA does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-Federal entity considers it a contract, when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a Federal award or subaward (See 2 CFR 200.22.)

Contractor means an entity receiving a contract.

Deficiency is information missing or omitted within a submitted application. Examples of deficiencies include missing documents, information on a form, or some other type of unsatisfied information requirement (e.g., an unsigned form, unchecked box.). Depending on specific criteria, deficiencies may be either curable or non-curable.

- Curable Deficiency – Applicants may correct a curable deficiency with timely action.

To be curable the deficiency must:

- Not be a threshold requirement, except for documentation of applicant eligibility;
- not influence how an applicant is ranked or scored versus other applicants; and
- be remedied within the time frame specified in the notice of deficiency.
- Non-Curable Deficiency – An applicant cannot correct a non-curable deficiency after the submission deadline.

Non-curable deficiencies are deficiencies that, if corrected, would change an applicant's score or rank versus other applicants. Non-curable deficiencies may result in an application being marked ineligible, or otherwise adversely affect an application's score and final determination.

DUNS Number is the nine-digit identification number assigned to a business or organization by Dun & Bradstreet and provides a means of identifying business entities on a location-specific basis. Requests for a DUNS number can be made by visiting the Online DUNS Request Portal.

Eligibility requirements are mandatory requirements for an application to be eligible for funding.

Grants.gov is the website serving as the Federal government's central portal for searching and applying for federal financial assistance throughout the Federal government. Registration on Grants.gov is required for submission of applications to prospective agencies unless otherwise specified in this NOFA.

Non-Federal Entity is a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education (IHE), or non-profit organization carrying out a Federal award as a recipient or sub recipient. If eligible applicants under the NOFA include for profit entities, this definition of non-federal entity includes for profit entities.

Point of Contact (POC) is the person who may be contacted with questions about the application submitted by the AOR. The POC is listed in item 8F on the SF-424.

Recipient means a non-Federal entity receiving an award directly from HUD to carry out an activity under a HUD program.

Subaward means an award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the

subrecipient to carry out part of a Federal award received by the recipient. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual beneficiary of a Federal program. A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract. The legal agreement must contain the subrecipient's assurance of compliance with program requirements, including but not limited to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements.

Subrecipient is a non-Federal entity receiving a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a HUD program; but does not include an individual beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also receive other Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency (including HUD).

System for Award Management (SAM), is a U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registry (CCR), Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) and the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA). Registration with SAM is required for submission of applications via Grants.gov. You can access the website at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>. There is no cost to use SAM.

Threshold Requirements are an eligibility requirement that must be met for an application to be reviewed. Threshold requirements are not curable, except for documentation of applicant eligibility and are listed in Section III.D Threshold Eligibility Requirements. Similarly, there are eligibility requirements under Section III.E, Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Affecting Eligibility.

Unique Entity Identifier is a number used to identify a specific commercial, nonprofit, or government entity. SAM states that currently Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) is the designated entity to establish and maintain the DUNS Number as the unique entity identifier required for registration in SAM and further used throughout federal procurement, financial assistance, and financial management systems. Beginning December 2020, the DUNS number will no longer be the official identifier for entities doing business with the government.

4. Program Definitions

Fair Market Rents (FMRs) - The rent, including the cost of utilities (except telephone), as established by HUD, for units of varying sizes (by number of bedrooms), that must be paid in the market area to rent privately owned, existing, decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities (24 CFR 888.111). HUD's FMR calculations represent HUD's best effort to estimate the 40th percentile gross rent paid by recent movers into standard quality units in each FMR area.

Historically Black College or University (HBCU) - The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, defines an HBCU as: "...any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary (of Education) to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation."

Institution of Higher Education (IHE) - Institution of Higher Education means an educational institution in any State that - (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, or persons who meet the requirements of section 1091(d) of this title; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, or awards a degree that is acceptable for admission to a graduate or professional degree program, subject to review and approval by the Secretary; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted preaccreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of preaccreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program - The federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.

The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from HUD to administer the voucher program.

Public Housing Agency (PHA) - Any state, county, municipality or other governmental entity or public body, or agency or instrumentality of these entities that is authorized to engage or assist in the development or operation of low-income housing under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937. PHAs generally own and manage public housing properties and administer the HCV program. They may also own other types of affordable housing and administer other programs that help their residents.

B. Authority.

This program is authorized under sections 501 and 502 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970 (12 U.S.C. §§ 1701z-1 and 1701z-2). Funding is provided by the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020(P.L. 116-94) approved December 20, 2019. The joint explanatory statement accompanying the Appropriations Act (available at: <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/HR%201865%20-%20Division%20H%20-%20THUD%20SOM%20FY20.pdf>) states that \$500,000 of the \$13,750,000 appropriated for “critical research, demonstrations, and evaluations” should be used “for a study of alternative methods for calculating Fair Market Rents in rental markets with rapidly rising rents.” Joint Explanatory Statement, Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, Division H, Title II, at 54.

II. Award Information.

A. Available Funds

Funding of approximately **\$ 500,000** is available through this NOFA. Additional funds may become available for award under this NOFA, because of HUD's efforts to recapture funds, use carryover funds, or because of the availability of additional appropriated funds. Use of these funds is subject to statutory constraints. All awards are subject to the funding restrictions contained in this NOFA.

B. Number of Awards.

HUD expects to make approximately 3 awards from the funds available under this NOFA.

C. Minimum/Maximum Award Information

HUD may award one or more cooperative agreements, with the total of all awards not to exceed \$500,000. The award floor is \$100,000

NOTE: Applicants may submit only one application. No person may be listed as a principal investigator on more than one application per project under this announcement.

Estimated Total Funding:

\$ 500,000

Minimum Award Amount:

\$ 100,000

Per Project Period

Maximum Award Amount:

\$ 500,000

Per Project Period

D. Period of Performance

Estimated Project Start Date:

09/02/2020

Estimated Project End Date:

09/02/2021

Length of Project Periods:

12-month project period and budget period

Length of Periods Explanation of Other:

E. Type of Funding Instrument.

Funding Instrument Type:

CA (Cooperative Agreement)

F. Supplementation.

For this NOFA, sub-section "F. Supplementation" is Not Applicable

III. Eligibility Information.

A. Eligible Applicants.

State governments
County governments
City or township governments
Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)
Small businesses
For profit organizations other than small businesses
Private institutions of higher education
Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
Independent school districts
Special district governments

Information on Eligible Applicants

Tribally Designated Housing Entities as defined by Section 4(22) of NAHASDA and Tribes as defined by Section 4(13) of NAHASDA are eligible to compete for, or receive, awards made under this announcement.

B. Ineligible Applicants.

Individuals, Foreign entities are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards made under this announcement. HUD will not evaluate applications from ineligible applicants.

C. Cost Sharing or Matching.

This Program does not require cost sharing or matching.

D. Threshold Eligibility Requirements.

Applicants who fail to meet any of the following threshold eligibility requirements will be deemed ineligible. Applications from ineligible applicants will not be evaluated.

1. Outstanding civil rights matters must be resolved to HUD's satisfaction prior to grant award, provided that all applicable legal processes have been satisfied.

2. Timely Submission of Applications. Applications submitted after the deadline stated within this NOFA that do not meet the requirements of the grace period policy will be marked late. Late applications are ineligible and will not be considered for funding. See Section IV. D. Application Submission Dates and Times.

E. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Affecting Eligibility.

Eligibility Requirements for Applicants of HUD's Grants Programs

The following requirements affect applicant eligibility. Detailed information on each requirement is posted on [HUD's Funding Opportunities Page](#).

- Outstanding Delinquent Federal Debts

- Debarments and/or Suspensions
- Pre-selection Review of Performance
- Sufficiency of Financial Management System
- False Statements
- Mandatory Disclosure Requirement
- Prohibition Against Lobbying Activities
- Equal Participation of Faith-Based Organizations in HUD Programs and Activities

F. Program-Specific Requirements Affecting Eligibility.

Not Applicable

G. Criteria for Beneficiaries.

Not Applicable

IV. Application and Submission Information.

A. Obtaining an Application Package.

Instructions for Applicants.

You must download both the Application Instructions and the Application Package from Grants.gov. You must verify that the CFDA Number and CFDA Description on the first page of the Application Package, and the Funding Opportunity Title and the Funding Opportunity Number match the Program and NOFA to which you are applying.

The Application Package contains the portable document forms (PDFs) available on Grants.gov, such as the SF-424 Family. The Instruction Download contains official copies of the NOFA and forms necessary for a complete application. The Instruction Download may include Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and additional documents.

An applicant demonstrating good cause may request a waiver from the requirement for electronic submission. For example, a lack of available Internet access in the geographic area in which your business offices are located. Lack of SAM registration or valid DUNS is not good cause. If you cannot submit your application electronically, you must ask in writing for a waiver of the electronic grant submission requirements. HUD will not grant a waiver if HUD does not receive your written request at least 15 days before the application deadline and if you do not demonstrate good cause. An email request for a waiver received by HUD 15 days before the application is due will also be considered. If HUD waives the requirement, HUD must receive your paper application before the deadline of this NOFA. To request a waiver you must contact:

Name:

Kinnard Wright

Email:

kinnard.d.wright@hud.gov

HUD Organization:

PD&R

Street:

451 7th Street SW Room 8226

City:

Washington
 State:
 DC DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 Zip:
 20410
 Kinnard D. Wright
 Phone: (202) 402-7495
 Email: kinnard.d.wright@hud.gov
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 Office of Policy Development and Research
 Office of University Partnerships
 451 7th Street S.W. Room 8226
 Washington, DC 20410

B. Content and Form of Application Submission.

You must verify that boxes 11, 12, and 13 on the SF-424 match the NOFA for which you are applying. If they do not match, you have downloaded the wrong Application Instruction and Application Package.

Submission of an application that is otherwise sufficient, under the wrong CFDA and Funding Opportunity Number is a curable deficiency.

1. Content.

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|--|---|--|
| Application for Federal Assistance (SF424) | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date. | |
| Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SFLLL), if applicable | HUD will provide instructions to grantees on how the form is to be submitted. | If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report |

| Forms/Assurances/Certifications | Submission Requirement | Notes/Description |
|---|---|--|
| | | Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Applicants must furnish an executed copy of the Certification Regarding Lobbying prior to award. |
| HUD Applicant Recipient Disclosure Report (HUD) 2880 Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report | HUD will provide instructions to grantees on how the form is to be submitted. | HUD instructions to grantees are provided by webcast, To view the webcast, click here. |

Additionally, your complete application must include the following narratives and non-form attachments.

- Abstract - One-page application summary as described in Section IV.B.2.b below.
- Narrative statement addressing ratings factors.
- Appendix containing up to five (5) resumes of key personnel.
- Appendix that lists the names of the firms for all of the subcontractors and consultants with whom the applicant has entered into an agreement to participate in an award under this NOFA and a brief statement of each firm's qualifications.
- Appendix containing a list of references outlining the applicant's performance of recent (within five years) and relevant social science research or program evaluations.
- Budget submission (display of all anticipated costs during the performance period, including an indirect cost rate).
- Code of Conduct. Applicants selected for funding will be required to provide HUD with their written Code of Conduct if they have not previously done so and it is not recorded on the HUD website at: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/spm/gmomgmt/grantsinfo/conductgrants
- Central Contractor Registration Requirement.

2. Format and Form.

Narratives and other attachments to your application must follow the following format guidelines.

a. Narrative addressing rating factors should not exceed twenty-five (25) pages. The narrative page limits do not include required forms, assurances and certifications, the appendix of participating firms and contractors, the appendix of resumes, the appendix of reference letters, the budget narrative, and the one-page abstract. The narrative must be formatted to fit an 8 1/2 by 11-inch page, double-spaced (information requirements), with one-inch margins, using standard Times New Roman twelve (12)-point font. Resumes are subject to a separate twenty (20)-page limit as follows:

- i. the application shall include resumes for no more than five (5) key personnel; and
 - ii. no individual resume shall exceed four (4) pages. Submitting pages in excess of page limits will not disqualify an applicant; however, HUD will not consider the information on any excess pages. This exclusion may result in a lower score.
- b. Abstract - One-page application summary needs to include:
- i. A brief description of the proposed research and/or evaluation project; and
 - ii. Provide funding request in whole dollar amount. The amount requested should be based on the scope of the project, personnel costs, other direct costs, as well as administrative costs, etc.

C. System for Award Management (SAM) and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

1. SAM Registration Requirement.

Applicants must be registered with <https://www.sam.gov/SAM> before submitting their application. In addition, Applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information while they have an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by HUD.

2. DUNS Number Requirement.

Applicants must provide a valid DUNS number, registered and active at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM>, in the application. DUNS numbers may be obtained for free from Dun & Bradstreet.

3. Requirement to Register with Grants.gov.

Anyone planning to submit applications on behalf of an organization must register at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and be approved by the EBiz POC in SAM to submit applications for the organization. Registration for SAM and [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) is a multi-step process and can take four (4) weeks or longer to complete if data issues arise. Applicants without a valid registration cannot apply through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Complete registration instructions and guidance are provided on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

D. Application Submission Dates and Times.

Application Due Date Explanation

The application deadline is 11:59:59 pm Eastern Standard time on

07/27/2020

Applications must be received no later than the deadline.

Submit your application to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) unless a waiver has been issued allowing you to submit your application in paper form. Instructions for submitting your paper application will be contained in the waiver of electronic submission.

"Received by [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)" means the applicant received a confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) then assigns an application tracking number and date-and timestamps each application upon successful receipt by the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) system. A submission attempt not resulting in confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number is not considered received by [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Applications received by Grants.gov must be validated by Grants.gov to be received by HUD.

"Validated by Grants.gov" means the application has been accepted and was not rejected with errors. You can track the status of your application by logging into Grants.gov, selecting "Applicants" from the top navigation, and selecting "Track my application" from the dropdown list. If the application status is "rejected with errors," you must correct the error(s) and resubmit the application before the 24-hour grace period ends. Applications in "rejected with errors" status after the 24-hour grace period expires will not be received by HUD. Visit Grants.gov for a complete description of processing steps after applying.

HUD strongly recommends applications be submitted at least **48 hours before the deadline** and during regular business hours to allow enough time to correct errors or overcome other problems.

You can verify the contents of your submitted application to confirm Grants.gov received everything you intended to submit. To verify the contents of your submitted application:

- Log in to Grants.gov.
- Click the Check Application Status link, which appears under the Grant Applications heading in the Applicant Center page. This will take you to the Check Application Status page.
- Enter search criteria and a date range to narrow your search results.
- Click the Search button. To review your search results in Microsoft Excel, click the Export Data button.
- Review the Status column, to view more detailed submission information, click the Details link in the Actions column.
- To download the submitted application, click the Download link in the Actions column.

Please make note of the Grants.gov tracking number as it will be needed by the Grants.gov Help Desk if you seek their assistance.

HUD may extend the application deadline for any program if Grants.gov is offline or not available to applicants for at least 24 hours immediately prior to the deadline date, or the system is down for 24 hours or longer and impacts the ability of applicants to cure a submission deficiency within the grace period.

HUD may also extend the application deadline upon request if there is a presidentially declared disaster in the applicant's area.

If these events occur, HUD will post a notice on its website establishing the new, extended deadline for the affected applicants. HUD will also include the fact of the extension in the program's Notice of Funding Awards required to be published in the Federal Register.

In determining whether to grant a request for an extension based on a presidentially-declared disaster, HUD will consider the totality of the circumstances including the date of an applicant's extension request (how closely it followed the basis for the extension), whether other applicants in the geographic area are similarly affected by the disaster, and how quickly power or services are restored to enable the applicant to submit its application.

PLEASE NOTE: Busy servers, slow processing, large file sizes, improper registration or password issues are not valid circumstances to extend the deadline dates or the grace period.

1. Amending or Resubmitting an Application.

Before the submission deadline, you may amend a validated application through Grants.gov by resubmitting a revised application containing the new or changed material. The resubmitted application must be received and validated by Grants.gov by the applicable deadline.

If HUD receives an original and a revised application for a single proposal, HUD will evaluate only the last submission received by Grants.gov before the deadline.

2. Grace Period for Grants.gov Submissions.

If your application is received by Grants.gov before the deadline, but is rejected with errors, you have a grace period of 24 hours after the application deadline to submit a corrected, received, and validated application through Grants.gov. The date and time stamp on the

Grants.gov system determines the application receipt time. Any application submitted during the grace period not received and validated by Grants.gov will not be considered for funding. There is no grace period for paper applications.

3. Late Applications.

An application received after the NOFA deadline date that does not meet the Grace Period requirements will be marked late and will not be received by HUD for funding consideration. Improper or expired registration and password issues are not causes that allow HUD to accept applications after the deadline.

4. Corrections to Deficient Applications.

HUD will not consider information from applicants after the application deadline. Before the deadline, HUD may contact the applicant to clarify information submitted.

HUD will uniformly notify applicants of each curable deficiency. A curable deficiency is an error or oversight that, if corrected, would not alter, in a positive or negative fashion, the review and rating of the application. See curable deficiency in the definitions section (Section I.A.3.). Examples of curable (correctable) deficiencies include inconsistencies in the funding request and failure to submit required certifications. These examples are non-exhaustive.

When HUD identifies a curable deficiency, HUD will notify the authorized representative by email. This email is the official notification of a curable deficiency. Each applicant must provide accurate email addresses for receipt of these notifications and must monitor their email accounts to determine whether a deficiency notification has been received. The applicant must carefully review the request to cure a deficiency and must provide the response in accordance with the instructions contained in the deficiency notification.

Applicants must email corrections of curable deficiencies to applicationsupport@hud.gov within the time limits specified in the notification. The time allowed to correct deficiencies will be no less than 48 hours and no more than 14 calendar days from the date of the email notification. The

start of the cure period will be the date stamp on the email sent from HUD. If the deficiency cure deadline date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, Federal holiday, or on a day when HUD's Headquarters are closed, then the applicant's correction must be received on the next business day HUD Headquarters offices in Washington, DC are open.

The subject line of the email sent to applicationsupport@hud.gov must state: Technical Cure and include the Grants.gov application tracking number or the GrantSolutions application number (e.g., Subject: Technical Cure - GRANT123456 or Technical Cure - XXXXXXXXXXXX). If this information is not included, HUD cannot match the response with the application under review and the application may be rejected due to the deficiency.

Corrections to a paper application must be sent in accordance with and to the address indicated in the notification of deficiency. HUD will treat a paper application submitted in accordance with a waiver of electronic application containing the wrong DUNS number as having a curable deficiency. Failure to correct the deficiency and meet the requirement to have a DUNS number and active registration in SAM will render the application ineligible for funding.

5. Authoritative Versions of HUD NOFAs. The version of these NOFAs as posted on Grants.gov are the official documents HUD uses to solicit applications.

6. Exemptions. Parties that believe the requirements of the NOFA would impose a substantial burden on the exercise of their religion should seek an exemption under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

E. Intergovernmental Review.

This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

F. Funding Restrictions.

An organization may not conduct research or an evaluation of itself.

HUD will determine whether the salary rates are reasonable, customary for the skill set provided and the tasks to be conducted, and in accordance with federal legal requirements.

Indirect Cost Rate.

Normal indirect cost rules under 2 CFR part 200, subpart E apply. If you intend to charge indirect costs to your award, your application must clearly state the rate and distribution base you intend to use. If you have a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate, your application must also include a letter or other documentation from the cognizant agency showing the approved rate. Successful applicants whose rate changes after the application deadline must submit new rate and documentation.

Applicants other than state, county and local governments. If you have a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate, your application must clearly state the approved rate and distribution base and must include a letter or other documentation from the cognizant agency showing the approved rate. If you have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate and elect to use the de minimis rate, your application must clearly state you intend to use the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). As described in 2 CFR 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. Once elected, the de minimis rate must be applied consistently for

all Federal awards until you choose to negotiate for a rate, which you may apply to do at any time. Documentation of the decision to use the de minimis rate must be retained on file for audit. State, county and local governments. If your department or agency unit has a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate, your application must include that rate, the applicable distribution base, and a letter or other documentation from the cognizant agency showing the negotiated rate. If your department or agency unit receives more than \$35 million in direct federal funding per year, you may not claim indirect costs until you receive a negotiated rate from your cognizant agency for indirect costs as provided in Appendix VII to 2 CFR Part 200.

If your department or agency unit receives no more than \$35 million in direct federal funding per year and your department or agency unit has developed and maintains an indirect cost rate proposal and supporting documentation for audit in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Appendix VII, you may use the rate and distribution base specified in that indirect cost rate proposal. Alternatively, if your department or agency unit receives no more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding per year and has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC. As described in 2 CFR 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. Once elected, the de minimis rate must be applied consistently for all Federal awards until you choose to negotiate for a rate, which you may apply to do at any time. Documentation of the decision to use the de minimis rate must be retained on file for audit.

G. Other Submission Requirements.

1. Application, Assurances and Certifications.

Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Application for Federal Assistance Programs is the government-wide form required to apply for Application for Federal Assistance Programs, discretionary Federal grants and other forms of financial assistance programs. Applicants for this Federal assistance program must submit all required forms in the SF-424 Family of forms, including SF-424B (Assurances of Non construction Programs) or SF424D (Assurances for Construction Programs). Applications receiving funds for both non construction programs and construction programs must submit both the SF-424B and SF-424D.

By signing the forms in the SF-424 either through electronic submission or in paper copy submission (for those granted a waiver), the applicant and the signing authorized representative affirm that they have reviewed the certifications and assurances associated with the application for federal assistance and (1) are aware the submission of the SF424 is an assertion that the relevant certifications and assurances are established and (2) acknowledge that the truthfulness of the certifications and assurances are material representations upon which HUD will rely when making an award to the applicant. If it is later determined the signing authorized representative to the application made a false certification or assurance, caused the submission of a false certification or assurance, or did not have the authority to make a legally binding commitment for the applicant, the applicant and the individual who signed the application may be subject to administrative, civil, or criminal action. Additionally, HUD may terminate the award to the applicant organization or pursue other available remedies. Each applicant is responsible for including the correct certifications and assurances with its application submission, including those applicable to all applicants, those applicable only to federally recognized Indian tribes, and those applicable to applicants other than federally recognized Indian tribes. All program specific certifications and assurances are included in the program Instructions Download on Grants.gov.

Assurances. By submitting your application, you provide assurances that, if selected to receive an award, you will comply with U.S. statutory and public policy requirements, including, but not limited to civil rights requirements.

2. Lead Based Paint Requirements.

Not Applicable

V. Application Review Information.

A. Review Criteria.

1. Rating Factors.

The maximum number of points from the rating factors that can be awarded to any application is 102. The minimum score for an application to be considered for funding is seventy-five (75) with individual minimum scores of thirty (30) points for Factor 2 and thirty (30) points for Factor 3.

Factor 1: Need for the Research

Maximum Points: 5

You must discuss how the proposed research will lead to the calculation of alternative FMRs in areas with rapidly rising rents that are closer to market rents than the current FMRs. The project narrative should discuss previous efforts to conduct such evaluations of alternative calculation methodologies and its challenges, while also addressing the need to assess the improvements made using alternative methods. You must explain how the proposed research would address the objectives described in this NOFA, and you will be assessed based on the extent to which the project would generate new methods that calculate alternative FMRs in housing markets with rapidly rising rents that improve upon the current calculations.

Factor 2: Organization Capacity & Experience and Key Personnel

Maximum Points: 45

Minimum points needed for funding consideration is 30 of 45 possible maximum points for this rating factor.

a. Recent Experience and Performance (Maximum 25 Points)

We will evaluate the organization's past performance based on research projects completed within the past five years. These projects should have reached completion and must demonstrate the organization's ability to conduct the required research. Ideally, some of these projects should be comparable in size, scope and complexity to the project at hand and have employed similar research methods. Specifically, we will place high value on experience that demonstrates your successful completion of multidisciplinary, project- or program-level analytical studies using a variety of analytical techniques. Past research into Fair Market Rents (FMRs) or other rental market or housing price trends will receive the highest point scoring. We will place high value on experience that demonstrates your ability to translate research findings into policy at local, state, and federal levels. We will also place a high value on experience in research, analysis and calculation of program parameters calculated for multiple geographies across the nation. For each recent engagement, you should provide:

1. A statement of the objective of the project.

2. A description of the research/evaluation or other tasks included in the engagement that would be relevant for this engagement, especially collection of data or modeling of local-level data that is critical to measuring gross rents paid.
3. A synopsis of how you conducted and managed the work, including the number of hours involved, data collected, methods of collection, and the total cost of the engagement.
4. A description of the final product or products of the research, the primary audience of the research, and how it was used by the primary solicitor, especially whether and how the information generated by the research affected policy, program, budgeting, or planning decisions.
5. Key personnel who worked on the project that will be working on the proposed project.

Note: Past performance may be verified with third-party references.

b. Key Personnel (Maximum 20 points)

For the purposes of responding to this sub-factor, "key personnel" is defined as your in-house staff, subcontractors and/or consultants who will perform an essential management or technical function on the proposed project, and who could not be easily replaced by other staff with comparable expertise.

You must identify the key personnel for the proposed project; explain their role in the project; and demonstrate that they have the education, skills, and experience required to successfully complete the project.

To be considered for maximum points, you must include in your proposed research and development team persons with expertise in applied research, project management, data management, software development, statistics, and writing and editing, as well as past experience in one or more topical disciplines addressed by this NOFA, including but not limited to working with large data sets, implementation of multiple analytical methods, econometrics, and data acquisition experts. You will be assessed based on the extent to which your proposed key personnel have the demonstrated education, skills, and experience required to complete the proposed research.

1. Provide a list of up to five key team members and their roles in the management and/or implementation of this project.
2. Demonstrate experience of each team member to carry out their identified roles in this project.

Resumes for key personnel should be included as an appendix to the narrative.

Factor 3: Soundness of Approach Maximum Points **Maximum Points: 45**
Minimum points needed for consideration is 30 of 45 possible maximum points for this rating factor.

a. Research and Design (Maximum 35 Points)

You must provide a draft research design that lays out the conceptual approach for the entire project. The draft research design must include specific research questions and hypotheses that

will be investigated by the proposed research, a data acquisition and analysis plan that discusses data needs, methods of collection, and analyses that respond to research objectives, and a plan for development of products that synthesize and disseminate findings to a broad audience including policy makers and practitioners.

The proposed research design will be rated on technical quality, clarity, creativity, thoroughness, specificity, and feasibility, specifically the extent to which it provides a methodologically sound and realistic approach for the proposed research, including:

1. The extent to which the proposal demonstrates extensive knowledge of this field of practice and research literature, addresses key research questions and identifying research products that successfully communicate findings and practices geared towards policymakers and practitioners.
2. The extent to which the proposal describes an adequate, comprehensive, and feasible plan to undertake a multidisciplinary analysis of alternatively calculating Fair Market Rents in housing markets where rents are rapidly rising, especially:
 - Scope of the types of data to be evaluated
 - Scope of analytical strategies to be evaluated
 - Method of assessing improvements in FMR calculations
 - Method for identifying what housing markets are experiencing rapidly rising rents and when to apply the alternative methodology
 - Comprehensiveness and feasibility of schedule of deliveries, deadlines, and the initiation of major activities (see Management Plan)
3. The extent to which the proposal describes an adequate, appropriate, and sound approach to data acquisition and analysis, including:
 - The availability and reliability of data sources
 - Strategies for obtaining data, especially data collected (scraped) from existing internet data sources
 - Proposals relying on publicly available data or data without a monetary acquisition cost are preferred.
 - Methods for analyzing the data to address the research questions

In your proposal for the collection of scraped data or the purchase of previously collected data, the draft research design must discuss sampling strategy and the extent to which findings will be generalizable, plus the anticipated costs of acquiring the information.

4. The extent to which the proposal describes an adequate and feasible plan for developing guidance for policymakers and practitioners on alternative calculation methods.

b. Management Plan (Maximum 5 Points)

You must provide a draft Management and Work Plan for the project that presents a clear, practical, and forward-looking plan to complete the proposed research. The draft Management and Work Plan must include:

1. A narrative discussion of how you will manage the overall project, including a discussion of how to assign appropriately skilled staff and how to manage

communication with HUD and other stakeholders (FMR users), major project milestones, interdependencies among tasks, and quality control procedures.

2. A schedule of tasks (including start dates and completion dates) and deliverables.
3. Allocation of resources, including staffing and labor hours, by task.

You will be assessed based on the extent to which your draft Management and Work Plan provides a thorough and realistic approach for managing the overall project.

c. Budget (Maximum 5 Points)

Your budget proposal should thoroughly estimate all applicable direct and indirect costs. HUD is not required to approve or fund all proposed activities and reserves the right to negotiate or redistribute funds as appropriate. You must thoroughly document and justify all budget categories and costs (Form HUD424CBW) and all major tasks, for yourself, sub-recipients, major subcontractors, joint venture participants, or others contributing resources to the project. A separate budget must be provided for partners who are proposed to receive more than ten percent (10%) of the federal budget request. Your application will be evaluated on the extent to which your resources are appropriate for the scope of your proposed study.

Your narrative justification associated with these budgeted costs should be submitted as part of the Total Budget but is not included in the twenty-five (25)-page limit for this submission. The narrative should provide an explanation of the basis for the major budget items. Separate narrative justifications should be submitted for partners that are submitting separate budget submissions.

Factor 4: Performance Evaluation

Maximum Points: 5

You must describe the general methods and measures you will use to regularly monitor the effectiveness of your work. We have identified the broad control measures that constitute high-quality research.

You must present a clear plan for regularly monitoring the effectiveness of your work on the following measures:

1. Quality of data acquired
2. Quality of data analysis
3. Quality of written products
4. Quality of performance monitoring guidance tool
5. Timeliness of performance and effectiveness of cost control measures
6. Spending compared to budget and anticipated rate of spending

2. Other Factors.

Preference Points.

HUD encourages activities in support of the Secretary's FY20 Initiatives. HUD may award up to two (2) points for any of the 3 preferences (OZ, PZ or HBCU).

Opportunity Zones.

This program does not offer Opportunity Zone preference points.

HBCU.

An applicant partnering with a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) will receive up to two (2) Preference Points when the application includes a Letter of Commitment certifying

that an HBCU Partnership is in place and signed by an authorizing official of the HBCU and documentation of the college or university's status as an HBCU. [Click here to view the list of accredited HBCU's](#)

An applicant designated by the U.S. Department of Education as Historically Black College or University (HBCU) will receive up to two (2) preference points when the application includes documentation of the applicant's status as an HBCU. [Click here to view the list of accredited HBCU's](#)

Promise Zones

This program does not offer Promise Zone preference points.

B. Review and Selection Process.

1. Past Performance

In evaluating applications for funding, HUD will consider an applicant's past performance in managing funds. Items HUD will consider include, but are not limited to:

The ability to account for funds in compliance with applicable reporting and recordkeeping requirements;

Timely use of funds received from HUD;

Timely submission and quality of reports submitted to HUD;

Meeting program requirements;

Meeting performance targets as established in the grant agreement;

The applicant's organizational capacity, including staffing structures and capabilities;

Timely completion of activities and receipt and expenditure of promised matching or leveraged funds;

HUD may reduce scores as specified under V. A. Review Criteria. Whenever possible, HUD will obtain past performance information. If this review results in an adverse finding related to integrity or performance, HUD reserves the right to take any of the remedies provided in Section III. E Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Affecting Eligibility, "Pre-selection Review of Performance" document link above.

2. Assessing Applicant Risk.

In evaluating risks posed by applicants, HUD may use a risk-based approach and may consider any items such as the following:

- Financial stability;
- Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in this part;
- History of performance. The applicant's record in managing Federal awards, if it is a prior recipient of Federal awards, including timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements, conformance to the terms and conditions of previous Federal awards, and if applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
- Reports and findings from audits performed under Subpart F—Audit Requirements of this part or the reports and findings of any other available audits; and
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

Two types of reviews will be conducted:

1. A threshold review to determine an applicant's basic eligibility; and
2. A technical review for all applications that pass the threshold review, to rate and rank the application based on the "Rating Factors" listed in Section V.A.

Only those applications that pass the threshold review will receive a technical review and be rated and ranked.

The highest ranked project will be funding first, and subsequent projects will be funded subject to funding availability.

VI. Award Administration Information.

A. Award Notices.

Following the evaluation process, HUD will notify successful applicants of their selection for funding. HUD will also notify other applicants, whose applications were received by the deadline, but have not been chosen for award. Notifications will be sent by email to the person listed as the AOR in item 21 of the SF424.

Negotiation. After HUD has made selections, HUD will negotiate specific terms of the funding agreement and budget with selected applicants. If HUD and a selected applicant do not successfully conclude negotiations in a timely manner, or a selected applicant fails to provide requested information, an award will not be made to that applicant. In this case, HUD may select another eligible applicant. HUD may impose special conditions on an award as provided under 2 CFR 200.207:

- Based on HUD's review of the applicant's risk under 2 CFR 200.205;
- When the applicant or recipient has a history of failure to comply with the general or specific terms and conditions of a Federal award;
- When the applicant or recipient fails to meet expected performance goals contained in a Federal award; or
- When the applicant or recipient is not otherwise responsible.

Adjustments to Funding. To ensure the fair distribution of funds and enable the purposes or requirements of a specific program to be met, HUD reserves the right to fund less than the amount requested in an application.

a. HUD will fund no portion of an application that:

- (1) Is not eligible for funding under applicable statutory or regulatory requirements;
- (2) Does not meet the requirements of this notice; or
- (3) Duplicates other funded programs or activities from prior year awards or other selected applicants.

b. If funds are available after funding the highest-ranking application, HUD may fund all or part of another eligible fundable application. If an applicant turns down an award offer, or if HUD and an applicant do not successfully complete grant negotiations, HUD may make an offer of funding to another eligible application.

c. If funds remain after all selections have been made, remaining funds may be made available within the current FY for other competitions within the program area, or be held for future competitions, or be used as otherwise provided by authorizing statute or appropriation.

d. If, after announcement of awards made under the current NOFA, additional funds become available either through the current appropriations, a supplemental appropriation, other

appropriations or recapture of funds, HUD may use the additional funds to provide additional funding to an applicant awarded less than the requested amount of funds to make the full award, and/or to fund additional applicants that were eligible to receive an award but for which there were no funds available.

Funding Errors. If HUD commits an error that when corrected would cause selection of an applicant during the funding round of a Program NOFA, HUD may select that applicant for funding, subject to the availability of funds.

B. Administrative, National and Department Policy Requirements for HUD recipients

For this NOFA, the following [Administrative, National and Department Policy Requirements and Terms for HUD Financial Assistance Awards](#) apply. (Please select the linked text to read the detailed description of each applicable requirement).

1. Compliance with Non-discrimination and Related Requirements.

Unless otherwise specified, these non-discrimination and equal opportunity authorities and other requirements apply to all NOFAs. Please read the following requirements carefully as the requirements are different among HUD's programs.

- Compliance with Fair Housing and Civil Rights Laws, Which Encompass the Fair Housing Act and Related Authorities (cf. 24 CFR 5.105(a)).

- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

- Economic Opportunities for Low-and Very Low-income Persons (Section 3).

- Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

- Accessible Technology.

2. Equal Access Requirements.

3. Ensuring the Participation of Small Disadvantaged Business, and Women-Owned Business.

4. Equal Participation of Faith-Based Organizations in HUD Programs and Activities.

5. Participation in HUD-Sponsored Program Evaluation.

6. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

7. Drug-Free Workplace.

8. Safeguarding Resident/Client Files.

9. Compliance with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. L.109-282) (Transparency Act), as amended.

10. Eminent Domain.

11. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.

12. Violence Against Women Act.

13. Conducting Business in Accordance with Ethical Standards/Code of Conduct.

Compliance with 24 CFR part 50 or 58 procedures is explained below:

In accordance with 24 CFR 50.19(b)(1) and (3), activities funded under this NOFA are categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) and are not subject to environmental review under related laws and authorities.

C. Reporting.

HUD requires recipients to submit performance and financial reports under OMB guidance and program instructions.

1. Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters. Applicants should be aware that if the total Federal share of your Federal award includes more than \$ 500,000 over the period of performance, you may be subject to post award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII to Part 200-Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

Performance Reporting. All HUD-funded programs, including this program, require recipients to submit, not less than annually, a report documenting achievement of outcomes under the purpose of the program and the work plan in the award agreement.

Quarterly Progress Reports: Quarterly Progress Reports will document activities completed in the most recent reporting period, planned activities for the upcoming reporting period, and budget expenditures by line item (including hours worked for specific staff). Progress reports must be submitted quarterly and should be aligned with the submission of drawdown requests.

Interim Report: The Interim Report will be released near the midpoint of this project and provide a summary of the project up to that point. The Interim Report should be considered an opportunity to evaluate the state of the project. The exact deadline and content of the Interim Report will be decided between the GTR and the awardee.

Final Report: The Final Report must summarize the work conducted over the course of the project, present the study objectives, data sources, analysis methods, and results. The Final Report is the key deliverable of the study and must serve as a standalone document that meets the overall objective of this project. The Final Report, following HUD review of the draft final report, should be edited and prepared for publication in accordance with HUD's Guidelines for Preparing a Report for Publication <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/About/style-guide-for-reports.pdf>

2. Race, Ethnicity and Other Data Reporting. HUD requires recipients that provide HUD-funded program benefits to individuals or families to report data on the race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and family characteristics of persons and households who are applicants for, participants in, or beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries of HUD programs in order to carry out the Department's responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act, Executive Order 11063, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Section 562 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987.

3. Program-Specific Reporting Requirements

N/A

D. Debriefing.

For a period of at least 120 days, beginning 30 days after the public announcement of awards under this NOFA, HUD will provide a debriefing related to their application to requesting applicants. A request for debriefing must be made in writing or by email by the authorized official whose signature appears on the SF-424 or by his or her successor in office and be submitted to the POC in Section VII Agency Contact(s), below. Information provided during a debriefing may include the final score the applicant received for each rating factor, final evaluator comments for each rating factor, and the final assessment indicating the basis upon which funding was approved or denied.

VII. Agency Contact(s).

HUD staff will be available to provide clarification on the content of this NOFA.

Questions regarding specific program requirements for this NOFA should be directed to the POC listed below. Name:

Kinnard Wright

Phone:

202-402-7495

Email:

kinnard.d.wright@hud.gov

Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Please note that HUD staff cannot assist applicants in preparing their applications.

VIII. Other Information.

1. National Environmental Policy Act.

This NOFA does not direct, provide for assistance or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing (other than tenant-based rental assistance), rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, or new construction; or establish, revise, or provide for standards for construction or construction materials, manufactured housing, or occupancy. Accordingly, under 24 CFR 50.19(c)(1), this NOFA is categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321).

2. Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. The information collection requirements in this notice have been approved by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520). In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB control number. Each NOFA will identify its applicable OMB control number unless its collection of information is excluded from these requirements under 5 CFR part 1320.

3. Web Resources.

- [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing](#)
- [Code of Conduct list](#)
- [CFDA](#)
- [Dun & Bradstreet](#)
- [Equal Participation of Faith-Based Organizations](#)
- [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System](#)
- [FFATA Subaward Reporting System](#)
- [Grants.gov](#)
- [HBCUs](#)
- [Healthy Homes Strategic Plan](#)
- [Healthy Housing Reference Manual](#)
- [HUD's Strategic Plan](#)
- [HUD Grants](#)
- [Limited English Proficiency](#)

- [NOFA Webcasts](#)
- [Opportunity Zone](#)
- [Procurement of Recovered Materials](#)
- [Promise Zones](#)
- [Section 3 Business Registry](#)
- [State Point of Contact List](#)
- [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#)
- [Uniform Relocation Act – Real Property Acquisition and Relocation Requirements](#)
- [USA Spending](#)

APPENDIX