

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-5700-N-27]

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for HUD's Fiscal Years 2013 Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program

AGENCY: Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, Office of the Secretary, HUD.

ACTION: Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

SUMMARY: Today's posting provides information and instructions for the FY 2013 Sustainable Communities Initiative. This Notice is comprised of both the Notice of HUD's Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), Policy Requirements, and General Section (General Section) to HUD's FY 2013 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs, posted on www.Grants.gov on August 8, 2012 and this program section to the NOFA.

This NOFA brings together \$3.0 million from HUD's FY 2012 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55, November 18, 2011)) and \$1.5 million from HUD's FY 2013 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-6, March 26, 2013)).

This notice announces the availability of \$4.5 million for capacity support grants to be distributed in support of the Sustainable Communities Initiative Regional Planning and Community Challenge grant programs. Pending availability of funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, awardees may be required to provide capacity building support to recipients of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) technical assistance, including the Brownfield Area Wide Planning Grants and the Office of Sustainable Communities' Technical Assistance programs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Specific questions regarding the Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program requirements should be directed to sustainablecommunities@hud.gov or submitted through www.hud.gov/sustainability. Written questions may also be submitted to the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Room 10180, Washington, DC 20410. Hearing or speech challenged persons may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339 (this is a toll-free number).

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

I. Federal Agency Name: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities.

II. Funding Opportunity Title: Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program.

III. Announcement Type: Initial announcement.

IV. Funding Opportunity Number: The funding opportunity number is FR-5700-N-27. The OMB Approval Number is 2501-0024.

V. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number for the Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program is 14.705.

VI. Dates: The application deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on **August 7, 2013**. Applications must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on the application deadline date.

VII. Additional Overview Content Information:

A. Purpose of the Program.

This NOFA is part of a cross-agency collaboration between HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), known as the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

The Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program (Program), through this NOFA, will identify consortia comprised of intermediary organizations that can provide capacity building support for communities engaged in planning efforts that support community involvement and integrate economic and workforce development, housing, land use, land cleanup and preparation for reuse, transportation, and infrastructure investments. The grantee(s) selected will be expected to deliver capacity building support to communities across the United States. To support these activities, HUD expects to make an award to one to two winning consortia.

The first purpose of the Program is to assemble a consortium of capacity building service providers to work directly with the FY2010 and FY 2011 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning and Community Challenge grant recipients, HUD Preferred Sustainability Status Communities, and select EPA Sustainable Community Technical Assistance (pending availability of EPA funding) recipients (collectively “Sustainable Communities Grantees”), and enable them to fulfill their anticipated outcomes. Eligible EPA awardees include those under the Brownfield Area Wide Planning Program, the Partnership for Sustainable Communities Brownfields Planning Pilot Program, and technical assistance recipients from EPA’s Office of Sustainable Communities from June 2009 to April 2013 (e.g., under the Smart Growth

Implementation Assistance Program, the Greening America's Capitals Program, and the Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program).

HUD and other Partnership agencies will work regularly with each selected consortium to maintain a coordinated and leveraged delivery approach that ensures the maximum benefit to local governments, regions, and entities and partners engaged in the prescribed activities. It is a high priority to maintain a continuity of service to the existing cohort of grantees, and the NOFA is structured to support that outcome.

The second purpose of the Program is to maintain a national coalition and leadership network of the Sustainable Communities Grantees. During the first round of this competition, HUD selected eight intermediaries to build a robust Sustainable Communities Learning Network (SCLN), comprised of online, virtual, and in-person training, technical assistance, and peer exchange among more than 250 distinctive Sustainable Communities grantees. The purpose of the network is to facilitate the exchange of successful strategies, lessons learned, emerging tools and public engagement strategies, and approaches for avoiding or minimizing pitfalls. Through this combination of virtual and in-person programming, the Program has enabled peer learning and exchange, which has contributed to a number of success stories among the grantees, including the emergence of new approaches and best practices. For example, grantees have learned from the experiences of others how to overcome similar challenges they face; tools have been disseminated from one grantee to another; tools have been co-developed across grantees; and grantees have been connected with new sources of funding. Going forward, HUD will work with the selected consortium to develop the evaluation component for the network.

B. HUD's General Section. Applicants for funding should carefully review the requirements described in this NOFA and HUD's FY2013 General Section. Unless otherwise stated in this NOFA, the requirements of the General Section apply.

C. Available Funds. \$4.5 million. Additional funds may become available under this NOFA pending the availability of EPA funds and/or as a result of HUD's efforts to recapture unused funds or to utilize carry over funds or other appropriated funds; their use will be subject to statutory constraints. All awards are subject to the funding restrictions described in detail in Section IV, Subpart E of the General Section.

D. Funding Categories. HUD seeks applications from consortia of organizations or partnerships that demonstrate significant knowledge, skills, and experience and a cohesive plan for building the capacity of Sustainable Communities Grantees to fulfill the goals of the Sustainable Communities program (see Section I.C) as directed by HUD. Applying consortia should designate a Lead Applicant who will coordinate their capacity building activities in cooperation with HUD.

The NOFA sets forth five outcome areas that the consortium should address through its application. HUD anticipates that certain outcome areas will be designed for delivery to the entire cohort of Sustainable Communities Grantees, while certain outcome areas will be targeted to specific grantees needing particular assistance with that subject matter.

HUD reserves the right to fund only those portions of an application deemed sufficiently qualified to address a targeted outcome area. Applications that bring complementary organizational capacities together are strongly encouraged. Each grantee will be expected to deliver capacity building support to communities across the United States. Please also see Section III.D.2, Threshold Requirements.

1. Outcome Areas: Initiative wide Capacity Building. HUD seeks a consortium that can support Sustainable Communities Grantees through particular strengths in the following thematic areas:

- a. Maintaining a National Sustainability Learning Network.
- b. Developing Effective Implementation Strategies for Economic Development, Job Creation, and Local and Regional Planning;
- c. Advancing Social Equity in Planning, Participation, and Decision-making;
- d. Strengthening Sustainability Practices for Tribes, Small Towns and Rural Places; and

2. Outcome Areas: Targeted Delivery of Issue Area Expertise. The consortium selected in this competition should also demonstrate specific expertise to support the grantees:

- e. Scenario Planning and Infrastructure Investment.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

This notice announces HUD's intention to offer funding through a competition made available as a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) under its Sustainable Communities Initiative.

A. Program Description.

A top priority of the Administration is to build economically competitive, healthy, environmentally sustainable, and opportunity-rich communities. This NOFA utilizes funds from HUD's Transformation Initiative.

The total funding available is \$3.0 million from HUD's FY 2012 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55, November 18, 2011)) and \$1.5 million from HUD's FY 2013 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-6, March 26, 2013)) for a total of \$4.5 million.

B. The Sustainable Communities Partnership.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is being implemented in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), co-leaders with HUD in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (“Partnership”).

The Partnership was conceived to better align federal programs to achieve improved economic prosperity and healthy, environmentally sustainable, and opportunity-rich communities. The Administration charged these three agencies to lead the way in reshaping the role of the Federal Government in helping communities improve local, regional, and state capacity to pursue sustainable community development practices because their programs most directly impact the physical form of communities.

As part of the Partnership effort, staff representatives from DOT and EPA have joined with HUD in the preparation of this NOFA. Staff from at least these three agencies will participate in the review and selection of applications to provide capacity building support to Sustainable Communities Grantees.

C. Program Goals.

The goals of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Program are the following:

1. Support locally-driven efforts to plan for and implement economically resilient communities and resilient regions. This Capacity Building work will utilize the Livability Principles as guidance for the work of communities:

- a. *Provide more transportation choices.* Develop safe, reliable, and affordable transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce energy consumption and dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
- b. *Promote equitable, affordable housing.* Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, ethnicities, and abilities to increase mobility, fair housing choice, and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
- c. *Enhance economic competitiveness.* Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
- d. *Support existing communities.* Target federal funding toward existing communities to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.

e. *Coordinate policies and leverage investment.* Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

f. *Value communities and neighborhoods.* Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

2. Provide specific tools, skills, and best practices that reinforce the efforts of local or tribal governments, metropolitan areas, and multijurisdictional partnerships that commit to adopt and implement integrated plans, strategies, and management tools that improve their economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

3. Facilitate strong alliances of residents and regional interest groups that are able to maintain a long-term vision for a neighborhood, jurisdiction, or region over time and simultaneously support progress through incremental implementation of sustainable development practices.

4. Build greater transparency and accountability into planning and implementation efforts.

5. Remove regulatory barriers to sustainable development for housing, economic development, transportation, cleanup and reuse of contaminated properties, and related water, sewer, and other environmental quality issues.

D. Outcome Areas.

The priority outcome areas in this NOFA are designed to support the overall goals of the Sustainable Communities Grant Programs. By funding a consortium of capacity building intermediaries to work with Sustainable Communities Grantees, the Partnership intends to increase the capacity of local leaders to develop, implement, and lead change to support economically prosperous, equitable, and healthy communities.

Overall capacity building and knowledge-sharing outcomes include: jurisdictions eliminating policy barriers and taking administrative actions that align and coordinate public infrastructure investments to support more sustainable outcomes; local and regional planning efforts that effectively coordinate transportation, housing, land cleanup, and water investments that meet community and regional goals on where and how to grow; and SCI grantees develop a common set of performance measures for tracking progress towards more economic resilience, environmental quality, and social equity, providing models that are transferred nationally to encourage replication and improvement on successful programs.

The five outcome areas for this program are listed below.

1. Maintaining a National Sustainability Learning Network

- a. The consortium tasked to execute the programming of this NOFA deepens the effective network of technical assistance and training established in the first round of the program.
- b. The consortium connects grantees across disciplines and stakeholder groups via the use of new media and internet technologies to share best practices and emerging trends, a virtual network of sustainable community practitioners, and an easily accessible online resource bank of all materials generated. Governments and practitioners create a strong peer-to-peer network so information and experiences can be routinely transmitted and shared.
- c. Participants exchange information on successful strategies, lessons learned, emerging tools and public engagement strategies, and approaches for avoiding or minimizing pitfalls.
- d. Participants increase their ability to connect, learn from each other through direct peer exchange, and benefit collectively from other national experts in face-to-face and virtual settings.
- e. Lead Applicant manages the coordination of activities and services provided by the consortium selected to implement the grant.

2. Developing Effective Implementation Strategies for Economic Development, Infrastructure Investment, and Local and Regional Planning

- a. Communities leverage public and private infrastructure financing to aid in the implementation of sustainable community plans and policies in a timely manner, including but not limited to land acquisition for affordable housing and small business development along transportation corridors, economic development (including economic visioning, job market analysis, cluster analysis and engagement), and increased employment opportunities in regions.
- b. Communities advance administrative reforms and improve intergovernmental cooperation that results in long-range sustainable development practices that lead with social equity, environmental sustainability, and economic competitiveness.
- c. Jurisdictions that receive capacity building support are able to implement the full complement of planning, zoning, urban design, finance, green and water infrastructure, and investment strategies that have been developed to improve sustainability outcomes in their neighborhoods, communities, and their region.
- d. Communities develop viable community and employment development strategies as integral components of their long-term sustainable development initiatives, utilizing tactics such as job training strategies, industry needs analysis, and cradle-to-career education reform;

e. Communities supported by SCI grant activities consider and, where applicable, implement an approach that emphasizes investments in existing infrastructure over investments which would increase the infrastructure maintenance burden carried by the community.

f. Regional planning entities, local governments, and water sector (drinking water, waste water, and stormwater) utilities collaborate to coordinate water infrastructure investments with transportation and housing investments when planning for new development and significant redevelopment.

3. Advancing Social Equity in Planning, Participation, and Decision-making

a. The increased participation and decision-making by populations traditionally marginalized in public planning processes in developing and implementing a long-range vision for the community and region translates into tangible social equity outcomes in the plan's implementation.

b. Low-income individuals and families, persons with disabilities, and limited English speakers in participating regions and municipalities have improved income, economic access, health, and civic leadership outcomes.

c. Communities supported by SCI grant activities target neighborhoods of high need, reduce social and economic disparities for the low-income and communities of color within the target region, and leverage improved economic prosperity for those residents for increased regional productivity.

d. Sustainable Communities grantee communities will learn how to manage, expand, and sustain the local and regional consortia through improved collaborative skills that focus on how to design and carry out multi-stakeholder consensus-based processes, including how to break down long-standing silos and collaborate effectively across agencies, sectors, disciplines and jurisdictions.

e. Accessibility to affordable housing, transportation, and economic opportunity improves for regional residents of all income levels.

f. Grantees realize the nexus between social equity and sustainable economic development and build pathways that connect marginalized populations to economic opportunity.

4. Strengthening Sustainability Practices for Tribes, Small Towns, and Rural Places

a. Tribes, small towns, and rural places participate in regional forums, webinars, and one-on-one technical assistance targeted to resolve issues distinctive to their communities.

- b. Specific policies, strategies, and approaches emerge that address the challenges and opportunities presented by rural places and small towns advancing a sustainable community development, including, but not limited to, open space and agricultural land management, cleanup and reuse of contaminated properties, wildlife management, natural resource management, transportation access and connectivity, finance, economic development, and effective water and waste infrastructure management.
- c. Specific sustainable community development implementation strategies emerge for different types of rural and small town communities, including, but not limited to agricultural, tribal, mining, gateway or resort, and exurban or edge communities.

5. Scenario Planning and Community Engagement

- a. Regions and local governments actively work with their residents examine the transportation, housing, environmental, fiscal, health, and other outcomes from alternative development scenarios, land consumption, and infrastructure needs
- b. Grantees prioritize deepened recruitment, engagement, and public visioning as core elements of their long range planning processes.
- c. Regional and local decision-making capacity for transportation and housing planning, infrastructure investments, environmental reviews, contaminated land cleanup and preparation for reuse, and air quality and climate change mitigation strategies improves.
- d. Tools emerge for effective communication and public involvement that allow clear visualization of development scenarios and trade-offs.
- e. Grantees connect to a broad range of state-of-the-art community engagement tools and techniques

E. Authority. The program was authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) on December 16, 2009. The total funding available is \$3.0 million from HUD's FY 2012 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55, November 18, 2011)) and \$1.5 million from HUD's FY 2013 Transformation Initiative (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-6, March 26, 2013)) for a total of \$4.5 million."

F. Definitions. In this NOFA, the following terms shall have the meanings below.

1. *Capacity Building Team or Consortium.* The term "Capacity Building Team" or Consortium, refers to a partnering of more than one organization to undertake the proposed capacity building activities. All members of the team must be entities eligible to apply (see Section III.A.1).

2. *Lead Applicant.* The term “lead applicant” means the organization that is identified by the applying consortium to be the entity that will establish the direct grant relationship with HUD if successful during this competition.

3. *Eligible Entity.* One of the types of organizations that can comprise the consortium applying to fulfill the obligations of the grant program, including a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, a local or state public agency, a for-profit organization, or a nationally recognized and accredited University or College. While for-profit firms are eligible, and they are allowed to cover their direct and indirect costs, they are not allowed to earn a profit from the project, and they are not eligible to receive EPA funding (should it become available);

4. *Sustainable Communities.* Urban, suburban, and rural places that successfully integrate housing, land use, cleanup and reuse of contaminated land, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: economic competitiveness and revitalization; social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; energy use and climate change; and public health and environmental impact.

5. *Sustainable Communities Grantees (or Grantees).* FY2010 and FY 2011 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning and Community Challenge grant recipients, HUD Preferred Sustainability Status Communities, and select EPA Sustainable Community Technical Assistance recipients (pending availability of EPA funding for this competition) – those eligible for support from the Capacity Building Team selected as the winner of this competition. Sustainable Communities Grantees may also be referred to by cohort, representing the grouping under which they were awarded.

6. *Technical Assistance Recipients.* EPA provides discrete assistance on specific sustainable community development barriers or tools to state, tribal, and local governments through a number of programs, including, but not limited to, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance, Building Blocks Program, and Greening America’s Capitals.

7. *Underserved Populations.* The term “underserved populations” means groups of individuals who fall within one or more of the categories protected under the Fair Housing Act or who are: of an immigrant population (especially racial and ethnic minorities who are non-English speaking or have limited English proficiency); in rural or tribal populations; homeless; persons with disabilities (e.g., physical or mental) who can be historically documented to have been subject to discriminatory practices not having been the focus of federal, state or local fair housing choice enforcement efforts; persons in areas that are heavily populated with minorities where there is inadequate protection or ability to provide service from the state or local government or private fair housing organizations, or populations that have faced generational economic disadvantage, job dislocation, or other forces that prevent them from achieving individual and family self-sufficiency.

8. *Water Infrastructure.* The term “water infrastructure” means the built and natural systems we use to treat, store and move our drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Funding Available.

\$3.0 million in FY2012 funding and \$1.5 million in FY2013 for a total of \$4.5 million.

B. Funding Categories.

Funding will be awarded to undertake capacity building activities to those entities that are best qualified to assist Sustainable Communities Grantees to fulfill the goals of the Partnership. HUD expects to make an award to one to two winning consortia.

1. Delivery of Cohort-wide Capacity Building Resources.

Cohort-wide capacity building resources will be delivered to most or all of the Sustainable Communities grantees. Consortia should demonstrate their ability to assemble best practices, support grant recipients around issues of leadership and equity, provide active information and peer exchange, and train targeted recipients in the thematic area. The outcome areas are described in more detail in Section I.D; the descriptions below indicate the additional required experience for the selected intermediary in that outcome area.

a. Maintaining a National Sustainability Learning Network.

Consortia members serving this outcome area should demonstrate specific expertise in building learning and peer networks of organizations that can exchange best practices, share information, and connect individuals who will derive mutual benefit from collective training and technical assistance. Because a Learning Network has been established (please visit <http://www.sclearningnetwork.org>), special consideration will be given to the ability to grow the existing site. Consideration should be shown for how lessons from the network can effectively be shared with other place-based initiatives such as Choice Neighborhoods (www.hud.gov/cn/) and Strong Cities, Strong Communities (<http://www.eda.gov/SC2Challenge/>). Consortia members should also demonstrate expertise in development and utilization of new social media, online tools, and new technologies to share information.

b. Developing Effective Implementation Strategies for Economic Development and Local and Regional Planning.

Consortia members serving this outcome area should demonstrate experience working with jurisdictions to implement long-range plans, with a particular strength in identifying and resolving barriers to implementation, infrastructure financing, housing, land cleanup, and development that supports sustainable communities, testing alternative growth and reinvestment scenarios, and working with community based organizations and elected leaders. Particular emphasis will be placed on the ability to resolve challenges to implementation that have been identified during the project activity of Sustainable Communities grantees from 2010 until the present; as such the applicant should demonstrate the ability to adapt their workplans as they

learn more about the cohort. Applicants in this outcome area should also have demonstrated experience with reviewing, assessing, and modifying local and regional land development regulations.

c. Advancing Social Equity In Planning, Participation, and Decision-making.

One of the highest priorities of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program is to infuse social equity principles into planning and development so that communities traditionally marginalized from such processes are positioned for maximum benefit from a Sustainable Communities framework. Consortia members serving this outcome area should demonstrate a thorough understanding of principles of social equity, fair housing, and promoting increased economic opportunity and experience in advancing such principles in a diversity of economic and geographic settings.

d. Strengthening Sustainability Practices Appropriate for Tribes, Small Towns and Rural Places.

Tribes, small towns, and rural areas face distinctive challenges in advancing a sustainable development agenda due to geographic distances and economic conditions that are endemic to such places. Consortia members serving this outcome area should demonstrate significant expertise in working in these communities to advance planning and development in accordance with the Livability Principles in a way that is sensitive to local conditions and cultures.

2. Targeted Delivery of Issue Area Expertise.

Targeted issue area expertise will be delivered to a more limited number of Sustainable Communities Grantees. Consortia members should provide access to national experts on topics explicitly identified by this notice and by the Partnership in order to work with communities on key issues through one-on-one technical assistance and group educational activities. HUD will work with Partnership agencies to coordinate the delivery of these services.

Scenario Planning and Community Engagement.

Scenario planning uses a range of tools to estimate the effects of land use patterns on transportation, housing, environmental indicators, such as air and water quality and greenhouse gas emissions, and the economy. While providing local and regional leaders with information to help guide future land use decisions, scenario planning is also a critical tool to engage community members about where and how they want to see their neighborhoods develop. Consortia members addressing this outcome area should have extensive experience in the range of scenario planning tools, ranging from simple spreadsheet modeling to more complicated GIS modeling. In addition, applicants to this outcome area should understand the data requirements of using different models and issues associated with the data requirements, and demonstrate an ability to provide training on building data and modeling capacity. This work requires adept communications skills on the part of grantees; as such the consortium members addressing this outcome area should have specific strategies for strengthening these capacities. Additionally, the participation of EPA in this notice underscores that applicants to this outcome area should

understand the importance of engaging water infrastructure managers in the community's discussion of future growth areas or decisions on which neighborhoods will be targeted for new transportation or housing investments. Consortia members should have significant experience working with regional planning entities, local governments, and water sector utilities on planning and implementing long term capital improvement plans, and understand their investment requirements and the external pressures they face. In addition, applicants should have knowledge and expertise in green infrastructure storm water management approaches and natural resource based planning approaches. The applicant should also note experience in providing training and performing scenario planning in rural communities or other areas with limited data resources.

C. Award Amount and Project Budget.

The lead applicant of each consortium should prepare a budget that specifies how its members will share the resources provided through the grant award. It is anticipated that the lead applicant will also identify expenses associated with overall project management as a part of the overall operating budget. The budget allocations should reflect resources appropriate to the scale of the outcome objectives (e.g. cohort-wide outcomes v. targeted technical assistance). HUD reserves the right to select all or a portion of the activities proposed by the applicant and/or direct the applicant to work in cooperation with other selected entities. As a result, HUD may adjust proposed budgeted amounts after selection and during final negotiations. HUD has the discretion to refrain from funding in a category if proposals do not satisfy the objectives of the capacity building program.

D. Period of Performance.

The period of performance will be 18 months, allowing the winning applicant(s) to work with the entire cohort of Sustainable Communities Grantees during their grant cycles. The period of availability of funds shall be in compliance 24 CFR 84.28 and 24 CFR 85.23, as applicable.

E. Type of Awards.

Awards will be made in the form of Cooperative Agreements. HUD and the other Partnership agencies anticipate having substantial involvement in the work being conducted under this award to ensure that the purposes of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Grant Program are being carried out nationally and that entities are following through on their commitments to sustainable regional development as evidenced by plans developed or expanded under this program.

EPA and DOT are strategic partners for this program and may provide substantial involvement in helping the successful applicant(s) in developing and implementing capacity building activities. Other Partnership agencies may be involved in the review, selection, and implementation process.

Substantial involvement may include directing selected intermediaries to provide capacity building services to particular Sustainable Communities Grantees for the purposes of

improving their performance, collecting and disseminating best practices through the network, monitoring capacity building progress, and review of deliverable materials including requiring adjustments prior to acceptance of the materials or proposed methods to be deployed to meet the objectives of this NOFA. HUD will also monitor to ensure there is adequate progress in meeting established performance metrics and ensuring consistency and coordination under this award through various capacity building providers, as well as in projects in participating jurisdictions that are funded through other HUD and Partnership programs, so that they are implemented in a consistent manner and are consistent with the Livability Principles. Specific reporting requirements are specified in Section VI.C of this NOFA.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Applicants

1. Eligible Applicants.

Under this program, it is anticipated that a consortium will apply to fulfill the requirements of the NOFA that is comprised of a combination of the following eligible entities:

- a. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization;
- b. A local or state public agency;
- c. A for-profit organization (for-profit firms are eligible, however, while they are allowed to cover their direct and indirect costs, they are not allowed to earn a profit from the project, and they are not eligible to receive EPA funding);
- d. A nationally recognized and accredited University or College; or
- e. Any combination of the aforementioned entities as a Capacity Building Team or Consortium to combine their skills and offer a coordinated program. A Capacity Building Team must designate a Lead Applicant to act as the fiscal agent for the grant.

2. The Role of the Applicant Consortium.

The Consortium selected through this competition will be responsible for developing the suite of activities that will comprise a capacity building agenda in each of the aforementioned outcome areas. Included in the activities should be an overall analysis of the current status of the skills, tactics, information, and tools most needed by Sustainable Communities grantees after their first two year's participation (developed in cooperation with the Partnership agencies), a workplan for delivering the skills, tactics, information, and tools, and a methodology for tracking the progress of the SCI grantees. The selected consortium will work with HUD to determine an overall strategy for delivering assistance to the grantees. The consortium will be responsible for assembling specific expertise as needed to address commonly occurring capacity building needs. Applicants should incorporate a sufficient travel budget within the proposed scope of work that will allow for occasional site visits with Sustainable Communities Grantees and grantee

participation in on-location events as appropriate. The scope of the task, however, will necessitate that a significant component of the capacity building be virtual in nature, and the applicant should demonstrate the ability to manage a capacity building program that features these elements.

3. The Role of the Lead Applicant.

To achieve the program objectives applicant consortia should designate a Lead Applicant. The Lead Applicant will coordinate the activities of the consortium, ensuring that expertise is available in each of the designated outcome areas, and will be evaluated on its ability to do so. Additionally, the Lead Applicant will be the principle liaison with the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities and will be responsible for managing the administrative requirements of the grant, including execution of the cooperative agreement and semiannual reporting. The Lead Applicant can be the principal capacity building intermediary in any of the designated program outcomes, although HUD encourages this role be played by the entity managing the Learning Network because of the synergies that can be achieved.

C. Required Match and Leveraged Funds

1. Required Match.

Applicants must provide a minimum 10 percent match of the requested funding in the form of cash and/or verified in-kind contributions or a combination of these sources. Successful applicants must have the required amount of match resources (10 percent) at the time of signing the cooperative agreement. In-kind contributions may be in the form of staff time, donated materials, or services. Please see Section III.C.2 below for a list of possible in-kind contributions. All assistance provided to meet this requirement must be identified by their dollar equivalent based upon accepted salary or regional dollar values. Cash contributions may come from any combination of local and/or state funds, and/or private and philanthropic contributions that are contingent only on the receipt of funding from this NOFA. Federal funds are not allowed to be used as match unless otherwise permitted by that specific federal program's authorizing statute.

Applicants will receive credit for leveraging resources greater than 10 percent of the requested amount, as described in Section V.A.4. If an applicant does not include the minimum 10 percent match resources with appropriate supporting documentation, that application will be considered ineligible. Please see Section III.D.2, Threshold Requirements.

2. In-Kind Contributions.

In-kind contributions can include physical items such as office supplies, and materials for projects. They can also be in the form of office and meeting space, including allowed use of computers, the phones, fax and copy machines, or the use of a vehicle, and other project related items. In-kind contribution can also be contribution of professional time. When an individual donates his/her time in a professional capacity to supervise members, train or engage in member

development, provide technical assistance on a project, evaluate a project, oversee project quality, or provide pro bono work as a member of the nonprofit organization on a permanent or temporary basis, the time involved is an in-kind contribution.

D. Other

1. Eligible Activities. Eligible activities include tasks necessary to achieve the overall capacity building outcomes of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities as described in Section I.D. These activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Build technical skills of Sustainable Communities Grantees to achieve their program objectives. Increase the ability of Sustainable Communities Grantees to implement the Partnership program activities. Targeted skills include: integrating economic development, spatial planning, and equity; land acquisition techniques; cleanup and reuse of contaminated land; water management; green infrastructure; energy efficiency; integrating the arts in sustainability planning; meaningful community involvement; regional affordable housing strategies; land use strategies and zoning and building codes; appropriate standards increasing housing accessibility for persons with disabilities; transit-corridor planning for mixed-income and mixed-use development; and collaborating and coordinating with regional and local government departments, agencies, nonprofit organizations, and utilities in planning and capital investment strategy development. Other relevant skills include integrated design, green specifications for rehabilitation and new construction, whole-systems approaches to green retrofit/new construction, finance, and incorporating energy efficient renewable energy technologies into existing or planned projects.

b. Document model sustainability policies, codes, and standards for broad dissemination. Document and disseminate model sustainability policies, codes, and standards – through online tools, as well as webinars and face-to-face opportunities – so that current and future Sustainable Communities Grantees and participants in other place-based initiatives benefit from this information.

c. Provide selected case management as designated by HUD. Provide specific support to Sustainable Communities Grantees at particular times of need, including one-on-one attention that ensures successful progress on their proposed scope of work. Assist Sustainable Communities Grantees in interfacing with other key agencies to help address any cross-silo implementation issues.

d. Distribute models for governance and engagement. Train Sustainable Communities Grantees in the roles of local, regional, tribal, and state governments in sustainability planning efforts, strategies for successful regional and cross-sector collaboration, conflict resolution, and inclusionary community engagement.

e. Enable peer exchange. Create cross-sector learning teams among Sustainable Communities Grantees. The format and content of the sessions would allow for informal networking among peers, the exchange of ideas, lessons learned, group problem solving, the dissemination of model

policies, technical skills, and research by national experts to further inform local and regional efforts, discussion of on-going evaluation efforts, and the interaction among awardees and agency staff to address emerging issues and themes. Face-to-face exchange between communities or regions sharing similar experiences is also a program objective. The applicant should demonstrate the ability to recognize and facilitate these opportunities as they arise.

f. Facilitate conference and convening opportunities. Work with the Partnership agencies to develop programming for delivery at national or regional conferences, workshops, or other gatherings designed to integrate the learning and best practices of Sustainable Communities Grantees. Integrate these efforts with numerous existing resources and organizations currently advancing practice in the key subject areas.

g. Develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools. Identify a set of performance measures to track the progress of Sustainable Communities Grantees in improving their performance in the selected outcome area(s). The Partnership agencies have developed a set of performance measures for this purpose and it is the expectation that successful applicants will start with these performance measures and modify for specific community conditions, if necessary.

2. Threshold Requirements. To receive an award of funds, all members of the applicant consortium must meet all threshold requirements contained in HUD's Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Policy Requirements and the General Section to HUD's FY 2013 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs ("General Section"), and the requirements of this NOFA. In particular, applicants should carefully review those provisions that could result in the failure to receive funding, including the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Awards Management (SAM). The System for Award Management (SAM) is the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registration (CCR) requirements, compliance with Fair Housing and Civil Rights Laws, provisions relating to Delinquent Federal Debts, and Name Check Review.

Applications that do not meet all the threshold requirements will not be eligible for funding from this program. Additional threshold requirements include:

a. Match. Applicants are required to provide a minimum of 10 percent of the total grant funds requested in match or in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions may be in the form of staff time, donated materials, services, or other allowable uses that contribute directly to the completion of the funding request. (See Section III.C.2.)

b. Eligibility requirements. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A.1. Applicants, if selected for funding, must be prepared to be fully staffed and ready to perform all approved work activities within 30 days of award.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Address to Request Application Package

Copies of the published NOFAs and application forms for HUD programs announced through NOFAs may be downloaded from the Grants.gov website. Applicants can find this funding opportunity and link to the application and Instructions Download with additional forms at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/find_grant_opportunities.jsp. If you have difficulty accessing the information you may receive customer support from Grants.gov by calling their Support Desk at (800) 518-GRANTS, (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or sending an email to support@grants.gov. The customer support center is open twenty-four hours a day, seven days per week, except federal holidays. The customer service representatives will assist applicants in accessing the information and addressing technology issues, including accessibility problems, in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (see paragraph 4(h), Accessible Technology). Applicants should ask for a Grants.gov call center ticket number if not provided one by the call center customer service representative. In case of issues, HUD relies on Grants.gov and SAM call center ticket logs as part of the review of records.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Applicants are to follow the submission requirements below.

1. Application Format.

The application narrative response to the Rating Factors is limited to a maximum of 20 pages (excluding appendices and worksheets) of size 8½ x 11” using a 12-point (minimum) font with not less than ¾” margins on all sides. HUD will not refer to websites for information pertinent to the narrative response or appendices. Any materials that the applicant intends to have included in the formal review should be incorporated in the 20-page limit of the proposal narrative. A maximum of 10 additional pages will be allowed as appendices. Materials provided in the appendices should be referenced and discussed in the narrative response. Materials provided in the appendices should directly apply to the specific rating factor narrative. Information that is not referenced or does not directly apply to a specific narrative response may not be evaluated by reviewers. Applicants are strongly urged not to submit information that is not required and/or requested by the NOFA or does not directly apply to a specific rating factor.

2. Application Abstract.

A single page (size 8½ x 11” using a 12-point (minimum) font with not less than ¾” margins on all sides) abstract with a summary of the objectives and expected results must be included in the proposal. Abstract should include: the applicant name (if a Capacity Building Team, include a list of partnering entities); a point of contact (name, telephone number, and email); the total proposed budget and applicant required match and additional leveraged resources, if any; the specific outcome area(s) applied for; and a narrative summary of the

objectives and expected results of the proposal. Information contained in the abstract will not be considered in the evaluation and scoring of your application. Any information you wish to be considered should be provided under the appropriate rating factor response. The abstract does not count against the 20-page narrative or 10-page appendix.

3. Application Checklist (optional submission).

a. Your application must contain all of the required information noted in this NOFA and the FY 2013 General Section. These items include the standard forms, and the certifications and assurances listed in the FY 2013 General Section that are applicable to this NOFA. The forms required for application submission and instructions can be found in the application at <http://www.grants.gov>. The “Checklist and Submission Table of Contents” below includes a list of the required items needed for submitting a complete application and receiving consideration for funding. Inclusion of this “Checklist and Submission Table of Contents” with your proposal is recommended but not required. The Checklist does not count against the 12-page narrative or 10-page appendix.

b. Checklist and Submission Table of Contents

- (1) Applicant Abstract (limited to a maximum of 1 page).
- (2) Narrative response to rating factors (limited to 20 narrative pages)
- (3) Other materials in support of rating factors:
 - (a) Organizational chart, bios, or resumes for key personnel; the percent of time those key personnel will spend on the grant; and proof of partnerships (appendices limited to 10 pages).
 - (b) Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. In block 8.d of the form, you must include a 9 digit number for your organization’s zip code (zip plus 4);
 - (c) Form SF424, Supplement Survey on Equal Opportunity for Applicants (“Faith Based EEO survey (SF424 SUPP)” on Grants.gov) (optional submission); and
 - (d) HUD424CBW, HUD Detailed Budget Worksheet, (Include Total Budget (Federal Share and Matching) and Budget Justification Narrative;
- (4) Form HUD-2880, Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report (“HUD Applicant Recipient Disclosure Report” on Grants.gov);
- (5) Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable); and
- (6) Form HUD-96011, Third Party Documentation Facsimile Transmittal (“Facsimile Transmittal Form” on Grants.gov). (Used as the cover page to transmit third party documents and other information designed for each specific application for tracking purposes. HUD will not read faxes that do not use the HUD-96011 as the cover page to the fax.)

C. Receipt Dates and Times - Timely Receipt Requirements.

Your completed application must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on **August 7, 2013** the application deadline date. Following receipt the application will go through a validation process. If the application fails the Grants.gov validation process, it will be rejected.

Please see the 2013 General Section for instructions for timely receipt, including actions to take if the application is rejected. Applicants should carefully read the section titled

“INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO DOWNLOAD AND APPLICATION PACKAGE AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS” in the 2013 General Section. This section contains information on using Adobe Reader, HUD’s timely receipt policies, and other application information.

D. Intergovernmental Review. This program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

E. Funding Restrictions. Applicants may not use funds for the following ineligible activities:

1. Ineligible administrative activities under OMB Circular A-102, Grants and Cooperative Agreements with States and Local Governments, and OMB Circular A-110 (2 CFR 215), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreement with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and other Nonprofit Organizations;
2. Ineligible costs under OMB Circular A-87 (2 CFR 225), Cost Principles for State and Local and Indian Tribal Governments, and OMB Circular A-122 (2 CFR 230), Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations.
3. Grantees that have not obtained required staff to perform the work, as negotiated with HUD as part of the terms and conditions of the award staffed up within the required 30-day period, may be terminated at the sole discretion of HUD.
4. Grantees that have not retained required staff to perform the work, as negotiated with HUD as part of the terms and conditions of the award may be provided a set date by which additional staff who are capable of performing the required work elements and are approved by HUD must be hired or face termination of the award.
5. Grantees that do not meet performance standards and requirements may be terminated by HUD or HUD may reduce the activities in the award and reduce funding associated to the reduced work level. Any funds recaptured may be provided to another provider that is deemed capable of performing the duties taken from the poor performing provider.

F. Other Submission Requirements.

Applicants are required to submit applications electronically via the website: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp. See the FY 2013 General Section for additional information on the electronic process and how to request a waiver from the electronic submission requirement, if necessary. Applicants should submit their electronic submission waiver requests in writing by email, mail, or fax. Electronic submission waiver requests must be submitted no later than 15 days prior to the application deadline date and should be submitted by mail to: Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities Attn: Roula K. Sweis, Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Room 10180 Washington DC 20410; or by email to sustainablecommunities@hud.gov or FAX to 202-708-0465. If an electronic submission waiver is granted, the application must be received by HUD no later than 4 p.m. eastern time on the

application deadline date. The electronic submission waiver approval notification will provide further information on where to send the application and the number of copies to be provided.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Criteria

1. Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Experience (40 points).

This factor addresses the applicant's capacity to successfully implement the proposed activities in a timely manner. The consortium must clearly state which team members will provide support in which outcome area or outcome areas (see Section I.D) their proposal seeks to address, and must state how those team members meet the required qualifications for that outcome area or outcome areas (see Section II.B.1 and II.B.2).

Rating under this factor evaluates the organizational structure of the consortium undertaking the program. The rating of the "applicant" or the "applicant's staff" for technical merit or threshold compliance, unless otherwise specified, includes subcontractors, consultants, sub-recipients, community-based organizations, and members of consortia that are firmly committed to your project. In rating this factor, HUD will consider:

a. Organizational Capacity and Qualification (20 points).

All applicants shall provide a narrative explaining how the organization or Capacity Building Team proposing to achieve the work is organized and how the team will function. The proposal should delineate who will play the role of the Lead Applicant and their qualifications to do so. The proposal should clearly describe how the Lead Applicant will coordinate the activities of its Capacity Building Team and its experience working with those partners (**5 points**). The narrative shall also include a description of the responsibilities including grant management, each team member's responsibilities, and procedures for allocating resources, setting goals, and determining progress towards implementation of sustainability measures. It shall also include an explanation of the capacity and relevant, recent (within the last 3 years) experience of the applicant or member of the Capacity Building Team. Please include a draft of the Consortium Agreement that demonstrates the readiness of the proposed Capacity Building Team to undertake the required tasks if provided with an award.

The applicant shall provide evidence of the accomplishment of members in supporting the development and implementation of regional, multi-jurisdictional, or other large-scale efforts in each of the areas relevant to the specific outcome areas for which their consortium seeks funding. The applicant should include experience in outreach efforts involving low-income persons, minorities, limited English and non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, and others traditionally marginalized from planning processes, in addition to any applicable fair housing experience. Applicants should describe challenges they have faced in executing capacity building in such settings and how they implemented strategies to overcome them.

b. Capability and Qualification of Key Personnel (10 points).

Applicants shall demonstrate that they either have sufficient personnel or the ability to procure qualified experts or professionals with the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities in preparing and delivering the targeted capacity building skills and activities. All outcome areas are described in full detail in Section I.D. Applicants should be prepared to initiate eligible activities within 30 days of the effective date of the grant award. This includes the number and type of staff to be dedicated to the project, from any of the firmly committed partner organizations.

In rating this factor, HUD will consider the extent to which the application demonstrates that the applicant or Capacity Building Team has an adequate number of key staff or the ability to procure individuals with the knowledge and recent experience (within the last 3 years) of integrated, multifaceted regional planning and community development. The applicant should describe what networks it has established to advance its capacity building efforts and how they would contribute to the strategy. The applicant should include bios or resumes for key personnel, or position descriptions and commitment letters from those key personnel who will be hired in the appendix. Please do not include social security numbers in bios or commitment letters from proposed personnel or consultants.

c. Experience Delivering Capacity Specific to the Needs of Sustainable Communities Grantees (10 points).

Having a clear understanding of the needs of the Sustainable Communities grantees will be of critical importance in maintaining the momentum built during the first two years of the capacity building program. Applicants shall describe what work they have performed during the past three years within any of the Sustainable Communities grantee communities. They should detail the nature of the work performed, the recipient of the assistance, and how that experience will improve delivery of capacity during the grant period.

2. Rating Factor 2: Understanding of Sustainability (10 points).

This factor addresses the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the sustainability framework as an approach for planning and project development in urban, suburban, and rural communities. In no more than 3 pages within the application, the applicant should describe how they envision the elements of a sustainable regional development approach that blends economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and social equity, including how they would deal with issues such as: housing costs, environmental planning and natural resource management, water infrastructure planning (sewer, drinking water, and stormwater), land cleanup and reuse, transportation access, socioeconomic inequity, economic opportunity, fresh food access, healthy communities, and areas of severe economic distress.

As a part of the explanation, the applicant should describe the critical capacities that a Sustainable Communities grantee would need to advance the approach and what implications that has for the potential strategy that should be employed in maintaining a capacity building agenda for Partnership grantees. The explanation should also demonstrate the nexus between the resilience framework and the specific outcome area to which the applicant is applying.

3. Rating Factor 3: Soundness of Approach (40 points).

This factor addresses the quality and cost effectiveness of the applicant's proposed work plan. Because applicants will be working with a cohort of Sustainable Communities Grantees whose specific needs are still being identified, a workplan that includes specific, measurable, and time-phased objectives for each major activity is not possible. Instead, applicants should describe, to the best of their ability, how they would build a capacity building program for the relevant outcome area(s). The applicant should be explicit about the way in which it would employ the eligible activities and how they would measure progress. Points will be awarded based on how the applicant documents that their proposed program will address the purposes of the Program (Overview Information Section VII.A) and Program Goals (Section I.C) and the effectiveness with which the proposed work plan incorporates each of the eligible activities (Section III.D.1).

a. Assessing the Needs for Capacity within the Cohort (10 points).

(1) Describe how the applicant plans to maintain engagement of the cross-section of Sustainable Communities Grantees to determine which eligible activities have been best employed for a given outcome area, and which activities are needed to improve the strength of the Learning Network.

(2) Describe how the applicant intends to translate what has been learned from the first two years of the operation of the Sustainable Communities Learning Network into an itinerary for delivering capacity building to Sustainable Communities Grantees, and strategies for sharing applicable practices with other place-based initiatives, most notably Choice Neighborhoods and Strong Cities, Strong Communities.

b. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Delivery (15 points).

(1) Describe the proposed techniques and approaches that the applicant anticipates using to deliver capacity building to the deepest possible cross-section of Sustainable Communities Grantees.

(2) Describe the specific steps that will be required to move from assessment to action and the expected metrics you will use to track progress towards achieving results. Emphasis should be given to ensuring that graduates of the Sustainable Communities Initiative grant programs are positioned to build on the momentum created by their planning processes to date.

(3) Describe the applicant's experience on dissemination of information using new social media tools and other new technologies.

c. Ability to Bring Capacities to Grantees that Explicitly Advance their Project Implementation (2 points).

Describe the partners that are part of the consortium that can address key implementation concerns of grantees such as formula funding alignment, capital absorption, energy conservation, aligning planning with improved health outcomes, and developing ongoing structures to continue work developed during the planning phase of the Sustainable Communities grants and what steps those partners will take to improve the likelihood of successful implementation.

d. Process to Disseminate Lessons Learned from Capacity Building to a Broader Constituency (3 points).

Describe how lessons learned will be broadly shared among Sustainable Communities Grantees, and where appropriate, to broader audiences. These may include subject-matter gaps, such as affordable housing, fair housing, transportation, water infrastructure investments, green infrastructure, or land cleanup and reuse, or process gaps, such as use of scenario planning methods or broad-based and extensive community involvement. Describe what learning opportunities support from the grant program will make possible.

e. Ability to Build on the Existing Sustainable Communities Learning Network (7 points).

During the past two years, the first recipients of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities grant program worked with the Sustainable Communities grantees to deliver technical assistance, capacity building, and networking in five priority outcome areas. Together they launched the Sustainable Communities Learning Network (SCLN), which has become a robust online platform for exchange between partners and a repository of best practice in sustainable planning, development, and investment. It is a priority of the grant program to maintain the momentum built during the first round of the program.

The applicant will describe how they will build on the existing SCLN, including (1) clarifying the most effective aspects of the existing network, (2) distilling the most current and pressing needs of Sustainable Communities grantees to receive more of the existing resources available to them (including local, regional and federal funding as well as other resources such as TA, training and education) and describing how those resources will be maintained, and (3) identifying what capacity needs laid forth in this notice are currently insufficient through the network and developing a plan to incorporate those resources going forward.

f. Budget Proposal (3 points).

(1) Budget. The applicant's budget proposal should thoroughly estimate all applicable costs (direct, indirect, and administrative), and be presented in a clear and coherent format in

accordance with the requirements listed in the FY2013 General Section. HUD is not required to approve or fund all proposed activities. The applicant must thoroughly document and justify all budget categories and costs (Form HUD-424-CBW) and all major tasks, for the applicant, subrecipients, joint venture participants, or others contributing resources to the project.

Applicants must provide separate budgets for partners who are proposed to receive more than 10 percent of the federal budget request. The applicant's application will be evaluated on the extent to which resources are appropriate for the scope of the proposed project. The budget form does not count toward the application page limits.

(2) Budget justification. The applicant's budget narrative justification associated with these budgeted costs should be submitted as part of the Total Budget (Federal Share and Leveraging), but does not count toward the page limits. Applicants should submit separate narrative justifications for partners that are submitting separate budgets. The applicant's proposed budget should clearly identify the funding or cash equivalent amounts being provided as leveraged resources. These funds should reflect the numbers and contributions provided in response to Rating Factor 4, Leveraging Additional Resources.

4. Rating Factor 4: Leveraging Additional Resources (5 points).

Resources committed to the program that exceed the required 10 percent match resources will achieve points for this rating factor. Resources may include cash or in-kind contributions of services, equipment, or supplies allocated to the proposed program from governmental entities, public or private organizations, or other entities. Federal funds are not allowed to be used unless otherwise permitted by that specific federal program's authorizing statute.

The applicant must support each source of contributions, both for the required minimum and additional amounts, with a letter of commitment from the contributing entity, whether a public or private source. Such supporting documentation must be provided in the form of letters of firm commitment, memorandums of understanding, or other signed agreements from those entities. Each letter of commitment, memorandum of understanding, or agreement to participate must include the organization's name, the proposed value of the commitment, and the responsibilities as they relate to your proposed program. The commitment must be signed and dated by an official of the organization legally able to make commitments on behalf of the organization. If the applicant does not provide letters from contributors specifying details and the amount of the actual contributions, those contributions will not be counted. This documentation does not count toward the page count of the proposal narrative.

Leveraging Resources (<i>in addition to required 10% match</i>)	Points Awarded
required match only	0 points
≤ 15 percent	1-2 points
$15 \leq 30$ percent	3 points
> 30 percent	4-5 points

5. Rating Factor 5: Achieving Results and Program Evaluation (5 points).

This factor emphasizes the HUD commitment to ensuring that applicants achieve the goals outlined in their workplan and other benchmark standards and assess their performance to ensure performance goals are met. The applicant is required to clearly identify the benefits and outcomes of their proposed program.

Based on the approach proposed in Rating Factor 3, describe the anticipated milestones necessary to achieve the critical actions that the applicant will take, and the expected metrics and results for successful delivery of capacity building. To achieve full points, the applicant must indicate what data they and/or partner organizations will collect to track progress toward outcomes for the defined target area. The applicant should specifically describe how they intend to disseminate policy and other lessons learned during the planning process to a diverse range of potential audience, including policymakers, other regional consortia, and interested community leadership. The proposal should describe how the agency will know that the applicant successfully:

- a. Increased the skills and technical expertise of partner organizations to integrate transportation, housing, water, and other infrastructure plans, align federal planning and investment, increase participation and decision-making in developing and implementing a long-range planning vision, and reduce social and economic disparities for the low-income and communities of color within the planning area;
- b. Shared knowledge among partners so that key personnel responsible for grant implementation coordinate cross-programmatic, place-based approaches;
- c. Supported knowledge sharing and innovation by disseminating best practices, encouraging peer learning, publishing data analysis and research, and helping to incubate and test new ideas; and
- d. Expanded cross-cutting policy knowledge, broadening the use of successful models to other communities requires definitive evidence of which policies, codes, or standards work and how, and a plan for public dissemination of this information.

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Evaluation teams.

Evaluation teams made up of representatives from Partnership agencies will initially evaluate each application as to how well it scores against the “Rating Factors” identified above and assign it a score on a scale of 1-100. The initial score will not determine the specific projects that will be selected for funding; rather, the score will be used to generate a list of highly recommended applications.

The highly recommended applications will then be forwarded to a senior level review team for review, and that team will make funding recommendations to the selecting official. Proposals will be selected by score except when necessary to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of grant awards based on a balance in the range of outcome areas being addressed, and to ensure the final cohort of awards reflects the range of activities and impacts covered under the Program Goals identified in Section I.C and outcome areas in Section I.D. The review team's rank recommendations along with the original rank order scoring shall be provided to the selecting official. The team may also choose to recommend parts of applications in order to fill the specific capacity building needs of the Sustainable Communities grantees. The review teams may include senior-level representatives from HUD, EPA, DOT, and other federal agencies.

2. Rating and Ranking. Please also refer to the FY 2013 General Section.

- a. Only those applications that meet the threshold review requirements will be rated and ranked.
- b. Remaining Funds. Refer to the FY 2013 General Section for HUD's procedures if funds remain after all selections have been made within a category.
- c. The scoring criteria to be used to award the maximum points for this NOFA are how fully and thoroughly the applicant answers each item listed in each rating factor.
- d. HUD reserves the right to fund less than the amount requested by any applicant relative to the total amount of available funds; and/or to fund less than the full amount requested by any applicant to ensure a fair distribution of the funds.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notice

1. Applicants Selected for Award.

- a. Successful applicants will receive a letter from the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities providing details regarding the effective start date of the cooperative agreement and any additional data and information that must be submitted to execute the award. This letter is not an authorization to begin work or incur costs under the cooperative agreement.
- b. HUD will require selected intermediaries to participate in negotiations to determine the specific terms of the cooperative agreement, and budget. Selected intermediaries will also be required to develop a Logic Model which identifies the activities and associated outputs as well as outcomes, upon which HUD will rely. See the FY 2013 General Section for information on HUD's use of the Logic Model. If HUD is not able to

successfully conclude negotiations with a selected intermediary, HUD will not make an award. If the applicant accepts the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement, a signed cooperative agreement must be returned by the date specified. HUD will provide instructions on how to have the cooperative agreement account entered into HUD's Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS) payment system and other forms and program requirements. In accordance with OMB Circular A-133 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations), if an awardee expends \$500,000 in federal funds in a single year, the awardee must follow the requirements of the Single Audit Act and submit its completed audit-reporting package along with the Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) to the Single Audit Clearinghouse. The mailing address can be obtained from the Clearinghouse's website. The SF-SAC can be downloaded at <http://harvester.census.gov/sac/>.

2. Debriefing. For a period of at least 60 days, beginning 15 days after the awards for assistance are publicly announced, HUD will provide to a requesting applicant a debriefing related to its application. A request for debriefing must be made in writing or by email by the authorized official whose signature appears on the SF424 or by his or her successor in office, and be submitted to the person or organization identified as the contact under the section entitled "Agency Contact(s)" in the individual program NOFA under which the applicant applied for assistance. Information provided during a debriefing will include, at a minimum, 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 assistance was provided or denied.

3. Negotiation. Refer to the FY 2013 General Section for additional details.

4. Adjustments to Funding. Awards will be made to a consortium in order to address the five outcome areas, or a combination of awards may be made in order to cover all outcome areas. HUD reserves the right to modify the number of awards to fulfill the strategic capacity building objectives, including not to fund an award in one or more outcome areas if the senior review team determines that no application in that outcome area will advance the program goals. HUD may also recommend that a winning consortium add additional capacity to its team in order to meet the objectives of its program; in such cases the scope of that capacity will be resolved through negotiation after the awardees have been selected. Refer to the FY 2013 General Section for additional details.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Refer to the FY 2013 General Section for additional details regarding the Administrative and National Policy Requirements applicable to HUD Programs, including the procurement of recovered materials requirement. For reference to the Administrative Cost requirements and Indirect cost requirements, please see OMB circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122 as applicable.

2. Environmental Review. Activities assisted under this NOFA are categorically excluded under 24 CFR 50.19(b)(2) and (9) from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) and are not subject to review under the related laws and authorities.

3. Environmental Impact. This NOFA does not direct, provide for assistance or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing, 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 review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4231).

4. Obligation to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing. Section 808(e)(5) of the Fair Housing Act imposed a duty on HUD to affirmatively further the Fair Housing Act in its housing and urban development programs. Accordingly, all of the HUD Regional Planning and Community Challenge planning grantees have obligations to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing in their planning areas. The selected intermediaries will affirmatively further fair housing through activities as directed by HUD to build the capacity of the Sustainable Communities Grantees to fulfill this obligation. Applicants should indicate applicable fair housing expertise as part of the narrative submitted in response to the rating factor indicated in Section V.A.1.a of this NOFA. See also FY 2013 General Section III.C.5.b.

C. Reporting.

1. Final Workplan. A final workplan is due 45 days after the effective date of the grant agreement.

2. Semiannual Reporting. Successful applicants will be required to submit semiannual and final program and financial reports according to the requirements of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities. The grantee's quarterly and final report must show specific outputs and outcome results against those proposed and accepted as part of your approved grant agreement.

3. Transparency Act Reporting - Recipient Reporting to Meet the Requirements the Federal Financial Assistance Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 as amended.

a. Prime Awardee Reporting.

Prime recipients of HUD financial assistance are required to report subawards made either as pass-through awards, subrecipient awards, or vendor awards in the federal government-wide website www.fsrs.gov or its successor system.

Starting with awards made October 1, 2010 and after, prime financial assistance awardees receiving funds directly from HUD are required to report subawards and executive compensation information both for the prime award and subawards, including awards made as pass-through awards or awards to vendors, where both the initial award is \$25,000 or greater or the cumulative award will be \$25,000 or greater if funding incrementally as directed by HUD in accordance with OMB guidance. The reporting of award and subaward information is in accordance with the requirements of Federal Financial Assistance Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, as amended by section 6202 of Public Law 110-252, hereafter referred to as the "Transparency Act" and OMB Guidance issued to the Federal agencies on September 14, 2010 (75 FR 55669) and in OMB Policy guidance. The prime awardee will have until the end of the month plus one

additional month after a subaward or pass-through award is obligated to fulfill the reporting requirement. The Transparency Act requires the creation of a public government-wide website in which the following subaward data will be displayed:

- (a) Name of entity receiving award;
- (b) Amount of award;
- (c) Funding agency;
- (d) North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for contracts/CFDA program for financial assistance awards;
- (e) Program source;
- (f) Award title descriptive of the purpose of the funding action;
- (g) Location of the entity (including Congressional district);
- (h) Place of Performance (including Congressional district);
- (i) Unique identifier of the entity and its parent; and
- (j) Total compensation and names of top five executives.

For the purposes of reporting into the FSRS reporting site, the unique identifier is the DUN and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number the entity has obtained from Dun and Bradstreet, and for Prime awardees the DUNS number registered in the Central Contractor Registration as required by HUD regulation 24 CFR 5.1004.

b. Prime Awardee Executive Compensation Reporting.

Prime awardees must also report in the governmentwide website the total compensation and names of the top five executives in the prime awardee organization if:

- (1) More than 80% of the annual gross revenues are from the Federal government, and those revenues are greater than \$25 million annually; and
- (2) Compensation information is not readily available through reporting to the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC.)

c. Subaward Executive Compensation Reporting.

Prime awardees must also report in the government-wide website the total compensation and names of the top five executives in the subawardees, pass-through or vendor organization if:

- (a) More than 80% of the annual gross revenues are from the Federal government, and those revenues are greater than \$25 million annually; and
- (b) Compensation information is not readily available through reporting to the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC).

d. Transparency Act Reporting Exemptions.

The Transparency Act exempts any sub-awards less than \$25,000 made to individuals or to an entity whose annual expenditures are less than \$300,000. Subawards with a cumulative total of \$25,000 or greater are subject to subaward reporting beginning the date the subaward total award amount reaches \$25,000. Any other exemptions to the requirements must be approved by the Office of Management and Budget.

4. Compliance with Section 872 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Pub. L. 110-417), hereafter referred to as “Section 872.”

Section 872 requires the establishment of a government-wide data system to contain information related to the integrity and performance of entities awarded federal financial assistance and making use of the information by federal officials in making awards. It is anticipated that the federal data system will be known as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS). Only federal officials and the entity will be able to view the information in the FAPIIS system. Further, each recipient of federal funds with a cumulative value greater than \$10 million and their direct (i.e., first-tier) subrecipients would be required to report to the FAPIIS system. The data collection requirements include information about certain civil judgments, criminal convictions, and outcomes of administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent 5-year period and were connected with the award or performance of a federal or state award. Recipients and first-tier subrecipients must report information at least semi annually to maintain the currency of the information. Section 872 also requires that an entity be allowed to submit comments to the data system about any information that system contains about the entity. Use of the FAPIIS system requires a DUNS number and current valid registration in SAM for HUD awardees and first-tier subrecipients.

Prior to making a funding decision, the federal official authorized to make the award is required to determine whether the entity is qualified to receive an award, taking into consideration any information about the entity that is in the data system. OMB is in the process of issuing regulations regarding federal agency implementation of Section 872 requirements. HUD’s terms and conditions to its FY2011 awards will contain requirements related to meeting Section FFATA and Section 872 requirements.

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

For Further Information and Technical Assistance, you may contact Roula K. Sweis, Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410-3000, telephone number 202-402-5645 (this is not a toll-free number,) facsimile number 202-708-0465; e-mail address: Roula.K.Sweis@hud.gov. If you are a hearing- or speech-impaired person, you may reach the above telephone number via TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Paperwork Reduction Act.

The information collection requirements contained in this document have been approved by the OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520) and assigned OMB control number 2501-0024. In accordance with the PRA, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 8 hours per annum per respondent for the application and 16 hours per annum for grant administration. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting the data for the application and other required reporting. The information will be used for grantee selection and monitoring the administration of funds. Response to this request for information is required in order to receive the benefits to be derived.

Dated June 21, 2013


Shelley R. Poticha, Director
Office of Sustainable Housing
and Communities

[FR-5700-N-27]