

## ROSS for Education Program FY 2016

### Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Questions and Answers (Q&A)

*In accordance with the HUD Reform Act, HUD cannot provide a determination to questions that ask about a specific situation (e.g. whether something would be eligible or how it would be rated) outside of reviewing a submitted grant application during its formal review process.*

*This Q&A is meant to provide general clarification to the NOFA language.*

**Q1. Are tribes or other non-Public Housing Authority (PHA) entities eligible to apply under this NOFA?**

A1. As stated on page 6, eligible applicants are public housing authorities (PHAs) (including newly established consolidated PHAs) that have Annual Contribution Contract units. Other entities are not eligible applicants.

**Q2. We are very interested in applying for the ROSS for Education NOFA. Per the NOFA the PHA "will hire and manage one or more Education Navigators..." Is it permissible to subcontract with an agency for the Navigators?**

A2. Yes, it is permissible to subcontract with an agency for the Navigators.

**Q3. On page 20 of the grant announcement, it states that "indirect costs may not be claimed" but immediately after it states that applicants may use the de Minimis rate of 10%. Can you tell me if the 10% indirect cost is allowed?**

A3. As stated on page 20, indirect costs may not be claimed. There was a technical error in the initial NOFA that presented conflicting information. On 8/23/16 HUD published a technical correction notice to confirm that indirect costs may not be claimed for this program. Additionally, the language that supports indirect cost rates has been removed from the NOFA.

**Q4. Will the ROSS for Education Grant be available for FY2017?**

A4. No funding for ROSS for Education has been requested in the President's FY17 budget. Therefore, it is not yet known if future funding will be available for ROSS for Education.

**Q5. Are you requiring a particular form or format to be used when submitting the required Budget?**

A5. No. As stated on page 10, a budget submittal is a program threshold. Each applicant must provide a detailed budget that shows projected sources and costs. The budget

must identify what is being funded with ROSS for Education grant dollars and what is being funded with match commitments.

Applicants may submit their budgets in the format of their choice, provided that it includes the required content.

Additionally, as stated in Section V.A.1.c(3), page 23, you may receive up to 5 points by providing a budget in your application. You may include an additional description of your budget to further detail on costs/sources as needed. HUD will review the budget to assess how consistent it is with the plans proposed in the application, the NOFA requirements, and funding restrictions. Fewer points will be awarded for lack of consistency, detail/clarity, reasonableness of cost structure or estimates, or for otherwise not following the rating criteria.

**Q6. Can the salary comparable be online resources, for example [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)?**

A6. As stated on page 16, applicants must base their Navigator salary request (including fringe) on salaries for similar professions in their local area. HUD has not evaluated (and will not) if this particular website conforms to that requirement.

**Q7. Is there a number of too few youths where an applicant should not apply? For example, if the applicant only has 50 total youths in their developments.**

A7. No, the NOFA does not include a minimum. However, as stated on page 27, "Funding Priority" section, HUD will fund grants in the following order: (1) top scoring applications from PHAs with no fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 and who committed to serving up to 250 program participants (approximately 4 awards are anticipated); (2) top scoring applications from PHAs with fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 (approximately 2 awards are anticipated).

Additionally, as noted on page 22, Soundness of Approach rating factor, this rating factor will evaluate the soundness of the plan you proposed in your application in comparison to the ROSS for Education program purpose, program requirements, eligible program activities, and the needs indicated in your application. The Soundness of Approach rating factor includes your describing how you will identify, outreach to and engage the target program participants you plan to assist through the ROSS for Education program – including the number of individuals you estimate would participate/benefit if this proposed is funded.

**Q8. Is there a sample narrative available for potential applicants to follow?**

A8. No, there is not. As indicated in the NOFA, applicants must respond to the criteria of the NOFA.

**Q9. Is there a program guide available?**

A9. No, there is not a separate program guide. The NOFA provides the guidance on the program, including eligibility information, eligible program activities, application and submission information, application and review information.

**Q10. Is the \$10,000 per year administrative cost available for each education navigator or limited to the total program?**

A10. As stated on page 15, Administrative Costs section, ROSS for Education grant funds may be used for administrative costs, but such costs may not exceed \$10,000 per year, regardless of the number of navigators. Administrative funds may be used for activities including but not limited to: administrative staff support; transportation; tracking and evaluation; office furniture or office equipment and supplies; purchase of hardware and software in the Education Navigators' office to support participants' educational needs and goals; program outreach; lease or rental of space for program activities.

**Q11. Can you clarify the control group vs the treatment group (meaning is it by AMP or by development)? Many PHAs only have 1 AMP with multiple developments included. Is a PHA eligible to apply for the grant with only 1 AMP?**

A11. A PHA is not eligible to apply for the grant with only 1 AMP because the NOFA and program requires a Control group and a Treatment group.

The Control group is the group of Asset Management Projects (AMPs) within a PHA's inventory that will not receive services from the Education Navigators. Within each PHA, resident outcomes, such as FAFSA completions rates will be compared between the AMPs being served by the Education Navigator and AMPs not being served by the Education Navigator.

The Treatment group is a group of AMPs within a PHA's inventory that has been randomly selected by HUD to be served by an Education Navigator.

Additionally, this NOFA refers to AMPs as plural. As noted on page 10, Target Population section, "AMPs" within a PHA will be randomly selected to receive ROSS for Education services. AMPs within that PHA not selected to receive grants will still participate as comparison sites [the control group].

**Q12. Eligible participants are youth ages 15-20. Do they have to live in public housing, or can they be HCV or other youth who live in the neighborhood?**

A12. As stated on page 4, Program participants are Public housing resident youth, ages 15-20. HCV or other youth who live in the neighborhood are not eligible to participate.

**Q13. Can PHAs that have been approved for Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversion or have already converted apply for the ROSS for Education Program?**

A13. No, PHAs may not apply to serve units that have been approved for RAD conversion or have already been converted. Also, PHAs that are submitting RAD applications for some or all of their units, but that have not received approval, will have to withdraw their request for a ROSS for Education grant as soon as they receive a RAD Commitment to enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (CHAP).

**Q14. The NOFA mentions a logic model but does not include one, is that something HUD will provide if selected and not needed for the grant submission?**

A14. No, applicants do not need to submit a logic model in the application. Page 20, Section V.A.1.d, Performance Measures rating factor, states that grantees (not applicants) will be expected to submit data using a HUD-prescribed logic model.

**Q15. It says that if you have no fewer than 500 youth you are eligible to have 3 full time Navigators. Does that mean to have 3 navigators you need to have 1500 total youth ages 15-20 or can you request 3 for 500 youth figuring you would serve 250 and use 250 as a comparison group?**

A15. As stated on page 13, to be eligible for a full-time Navigator, applicants must have no fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 residing in its public housing inventory and commit to serving up to 250 program participants. HUD will fund a maximum of three full-time Navigators per PHA.

In this particular case, it will be up to the PHA to determine the number of Education Navigators that they wish for HUD to fund (i.e. 1, 2, or 3), based on your need.

**Q16. Are current ROSS-Service Coordinators or FSS Grantees eligible to apply for ROSS for Education grant funds?**

A16. Yes, because the NOFA states that eligible applicants are PHAs.

**Q17. Are the 250 participants for two-years of the program or per year?**

A17. The grant term is two years. Therefore, 250 participants [from the randomly assigned AMPs] are expected to be served each year of the 2-year grant term.

**Q18. Is it 250 participants if we propose to hire one, two, or three Navigators?**

A18. Yes. In either of these case, if you have no fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 residing in your public housing inventory and commit to serving up to 250 program participants, HUD will fund a maximum of three full-time Navigators per PHAs. It will be up to the PHA to determine how many Navigators would be appropriate for your program needs.

**Q19. Will the ROSS for Education application FR-6000-N-27, require a Certification of Consistency/HUD-2991 form? I do not see it listed as a requirement in the NOFA, however it is a requirement for other ROSS programs.**

A19. The HUD-2991 form is not a submission requirement of the NOFA.

**Q20. We are a public housing authority and have a small number of units – 158 in scattered sites. I think the ROSS for Education NOFA is a great idea, and would love to submit an application to assist the youth in our sites. But, the package states only six awards will be given, so that means only larger authorities should apply, correct? I see the note about two of those for authorities under 500 youth, but our pool is much, much, smaller. Please advise as to whether or not a very small authority should take the time to complete the application.**

A20. The NOFA indicates that HUD expects to make approximately 6 awards from the funds available under this NOFA.

HUD expects to make approximately 4 awards to PHAs with no fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 and 2 awards to PHAs with fewer than 500 youth ages 15-20 from the funds available under this NOFA.

**Q21. I am hearing from other staff they saw something on line about additional funding categories (i.e. marketing) being allowed through this funding opportunity. That is not my read. Can you clarify?**

A21. As stated on page 14, Eligible Program Activities, marketing the program to youth participants ages 15-20 is an eligible activity. Marketing efforts would be included in the Navigators' job, and funding for marketing efforts would be included in the Administrative Cost Budget Line Item (BLI).

For this program, there are only three BLIs – Salary/Fringe, Administrative Cost, and Training.

**Q22. Given the number we are expecting to serve, I would assume we are eligible for about half of all allowable line items.....5 FTE or \$35,000, \$1,000 for Training, and \$5,000 for admin. So \$41,000 would be our maximum annual award, for the two-year term, that would be \$82,000. Can you clarify?**

A22. The ROSS for Education NOFA has three program thresholds for all applicants: target population, match, and budget. Additionally, and in accordance with the Budget rating, each applicant must provide a detailed budget that shows projected sources and costs. The budget must identify what is being funded with ROSS for Education grant dollars and what is being funded with match commitments (refer to Section V.A.1.c (3) for more information).

The maximums in the NOFA are not affected by choices the applicant makes about whom to serve and how to structure their program. All requests, however, must be justified in the responses to the rating factors.

**Q23. Do I need to submit match letters in my application or keep on file?**

**A23.** As stated on page 10 - Match section, and page 16 - Content section, applicants must submit match letters with their application.

**Q24. Which funding fiscal year is this NOFA supporting, FY15 or FY16?**

**A20.** This NOFA is supporting the FY16 fiscal year. There was a technical error in the initial published NOFA that referenced FY15. On 8/23/16 HUD published a technical correction that removed reference to FY15 and replaced them with FY16 references.

**Q25. Can any portion of my application be faxed to HUD?**

**A25.** HUD is no longer offering options to submit facsimiles to HUD. There was a technical error in the initial published NOFA on page 11 that referenced having the option to submit forms and letters to HUD by facsimile. On 8/23/16 HUD published a technical correction that removed this language.