



**Administration for Children and Families**

**Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**

**Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants**

**HHS-2023-ACF-OPRE-PE-0005**

**Application Due Date: 06/29/2023**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
I. Program Description.....	3
II. Federal Award Information.....	13
III. Eligibility Information .....	14
III.1. Eligible Applicants.....	14
III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching .....	15
III.3. Other.....	15
IV. Application and Submission Information.....	17
IV.1. Address to Request Application Package .....	17
IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission .....	17
Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications .....	23
The Project Description .....	26
The Project Budget and Budget Justification.....	32
Application Submission Options .....	37
IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) .....	40
IV.4. Submission Dates and Times .....	41
Explanation of Due Dates .....	41
Acknowledgement of Received Application .....	43
IV.5. Intergovernmental Review.....	43
IV.6. Funding Restrictions .....	43
IV.7. Other Submission Requirements .....	44
V. Application Review Information .....	44
V.1. Criteria.....	44
V.2. Review and Selection Process.....	47
V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates .....	48
VI. Federal Award Administration Information.....	49
VI.1. Federal Award Notices .....	49
VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements .....	49
VI.3. Reporting .....	51
VII. HHS Award Agency Contact(s).....	51
VIII. Other Information .....	52
Reference Websites.....	52
Application Checklist.....	52

**Funding Opportunity Title:**

Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants

**Announcement Type:**

Initial

**Funding Opportunity Number:**

HHS-2023-ACF-OPRE-PE-0005

**Primary CFDA Number:**

93.595

**Due Date for Applications:**

06/29/2023

**Executive Summary****Notice:**

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants & Funding Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant>.**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) is soliciting applications for Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants to support secondary analysis of data collected to rigorously evaluate a collection of career pathways programs. The purpose of these grants is to better understand the effectiveness of services funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs that aim to address the employment and self-sufficiency needs of TANF recipients and those eligible for, or at risk of, TANF receipt. Career pathways programs are one such service. Career pathways programs provide post-secondary education and training organized as a series of manageable steps leading to successively higher credentials and employment opportunities in growing occupations. Programs also provide financial, academic, and non-academic support to help primarily non-traditional students with low incomes enroll and persist in education. Career pathways programs can offer an efficient and client-centered approach to career and technical education and training by connecting adult basic education, occupational training, postsecondary education, and supportive services.

OPRE oversees a robust portfolio of research to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of career pathways programs, including the Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) project and the evaluation of two rounds of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) Program. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/career-pathways-research-portfolio>. Data from these studies are available for secondary analysis through the Child and Family Data Archive (CFData) (<https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org>). A webinar on how to access and use the data is available at <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/video-resources.html?categories=Career%20Pathways>. The grants are intended to support rigorous, policy-relevant secondary analysis of these career pathways data sets.

## I. Program Description

### Statutory Authority

Awards offered under this program will be funded under the authority of section 413 of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 613

### Description

#### A. Background

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 established the TANF program to replace the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. The four statutory purposes of TANF are as follows:

- Assist needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes;
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

States, tribes, and U.S. territories receive federal TANF funding in the form of a block grant, which provides broad flexibility in the design and implementation of TANF programs. Federal TANF funds and the required state match (known as "maintenance of effort" funds) can be spent on any activity reasonably calculated to achieve one or more of the above-referenced purposes of TANF. TANF eligibility varies by state/tribe/territory and is determined based on income and other household characteristics. More information about the TANF program can be found at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/temporary-assistance-needy-families-tanf>.

The ACF Office of Family Assistance (OFA) administers the TANF program. In 2016, OFA released Information Memorandum No. [TANF-ACF-IM-2016-05](#) that encouraged TANF agencies to adopt policies and practices that will connect families to career pathways to help parents receive training and credentials in support of obtaining jobs with family-sustaining wages. OFA noted:

*All federal TANF and state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) expenditures must meet one or more of the four statutory purposes of the TANF program. Career pathways programs fall under the second purpose, to end the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage. TANF agencies may use TANF and MOE funds to support a range of benefits and services for low-income parents as part of a career pathways approach, such as adult basic education, job training, job placement, postsecondary education (including career and technical training), apprenticeships and subsidized employment, and support services such as child care and transportation.*

Education and training are critical to obtaining employment that pays family-supporting wages for TANF recipients and TANF-eligible adults. Job opportunities in specific sectors, such as healthcare and information technology (IT), are increasing, and local economies are experiencing labor shortages in these sectors. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that most employment gains in the United States from 2021 to 2031 will occur in service-providing sectors such as health care, driven by increasing demand in healthcare industries and occupations because of the aging U.S. population (Dubina, Kim, Colato, & Rielely 2022). In addition, the economic recovery

from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and structural changes induced by the pandemic is spurring higher demand for IT services. Computer-related industries and occupations are expected to see long-term growth in coming years. Many of these growing occupations do not require a 4-year degree, but do require some postsecondary education or training (Torpey, 2020).

To better understand the effectiveness of career pathways programs in meeting the second statutory purpose of TANF—to end dependence on government benefits by promoting job preparation and work—OPRE within ACF has invested in a large portfolio of research evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of career pathways programs that serve TANF recipients and other adults with low incomes. Programs that use the career pathways framework of postsecondary education are designed to address the dual goals of preparing individuals for employment and meeting local labor market demand. Career pathways programs provide postsecondary education and training as a series of manageable steps leading to successively higher credentials and employment opportunities in growing occupations (Fein, 2012; Werner et al., 2013). Each step is designed to prepare students for the next level of employment and education and to provide a credential with labor market value. To effectively engage, retain, and facilitate learning for diverse populations, programs often integrate comprehensive screening and assessment, promising instructional strategies targeted at adult learners, academic and non-academic supports, and employment experiences and opportunities. The programs included in OPRE’s PACE and HPOG evaluations vary in their design and implementation of these core principles. Each program creates a constellation of services and supports that are appropriate for the given program or recipient organization, its context, objectives, and target population. As a result, career pathways programs offer an efficient and client-centered approach to career and technical education.

More information about OPRE’s complete career pathways research portfolio is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/career-pathways>. More information about OPRE’s broader portfolio of research and evaluation on TANF and family self-sufficiency is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/topic/self-sufficiency-welfare-employment>.

### ***PACE project***

In 2007, OPRE launched PACE, a random assignment evaluation of nine career pathways interventions that aimed to increase employment and self-sufficiency among individuals with low incomes and low academic skills. The project was designed to assess the impact of the interventions on educational attainment, employment and earnings, and other relevant outcomes. All programs in the PACE project contained key elements of the career pathways framework, but they varied in their designs and combined and prioritized different program elements and career pathways steps. Areas of variation include the following:

- *Lead Organization:* The programs in PACE were operated by community or technical colleges, non-profit organizations, and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).
- *Target Population:* By design, all the programs in PACE targeted adults with low incomes and low academic skills; however, some focused on specific populations, such as Latinos or young adults. Additionally, programs varied on the skill level of the participants targeted.

- *Occupational Focus:* Several programs in PACE focused exclusively on health-related occupations. The other programs focused on areas such as welding, electrical, administrative support, manufacturing, technology/IT, and financial services.
- *Steps on a Career Pathway:* The programs varied in the number and level of steps within a career pathway covered.
- *Service Strategies:* All programs included some type of assessment, instructional approaches targeted to adult learners, support services, and connections to employment. The programs combined these strategies in different ways depending on the goals of their program and the target population.

Nearly 12 percent of all study participants in PACE reported receiving TANF or public assistance in the 12 months before enrollment (Gardiner and Juras, 2019). The percentage of TANF recipients varied by program, ranging from about 5 percent to over 40 percent.

The PACE project included three follow-up periods at 15, 36, and 72 months after random assignment. Using an experimental design, the study measured differences between the treatment and control group members on educational outcomes (e.g., persistence in education, receipt of certificates and degrees), labor market outcomes (e.g., earnings, employment), and family well-being outcomes (e.g., debt, financial hardship, child development). The key research questions addressed in PACE include the following:

- What is the basic design and underlying logic of each PACE program? What are its elements?
- What was the actual implementation of the intervention? Did it deviate from plans or expectations?
- What were the students' participation patterns and experiences with program services?
- What are the short, intermediate, and long-term effects of the PACE programs on earnings, educational outcomes, household income, adult well-being, and other life outcomes?
- How do the effects of PACE programs vary over time, across outcomes or domains and by participant characteristics?

Data sources vary by program but generally include the following:

- Program records on program offerings and participant service receipt;
- College records (when available);
- Study participant information collected at baseline;
- Study participant follow-up information collected through a series of surveys administered approximately at 15 and 36 months after random assignment for all programs, and again at 72 months for four programs; and
- Administrative data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH).

The study analyzed and reported findings for each program separately. Programs began random assignment in November 2011, and random assignment ended in all sites in fall 2014. The total sample per site ranges from approximately 650 to over 2,500 individuals; the total sample across all PACE programs is 9,259 individuals. Additionally, the PACE evaluation of each program

included an implementation study that provided a detailed description of the program, documented the experiences of participants (the treatment group), and examined how their program experiences compared to individuals who did not receive the program services (the control group).

OPRE has released reports for each wave of data collection with the programs in the PACE project. All products from the PACE project are available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/pathways-for-advancing-careers-and-education>.

### ***HPOG Program***

The HPOG Program awarded grants to organizations that provided education and training to TANF recipients and other individuals with low incomes for health care occupations that were expected to either experience labor shortages or be in high-demand. In 2010, ACF within HHS awarded the first round of 5-year HPOG grants (HPOG 1.0) to 32 recipients. In 2015, ACF awarded the second round of 5-year grants (HPOG 2.0) to 32 recipients, 17 of which received funding under HPOG 1.0. HPOG 2.0 grants were later extended an additional year, ending in September 2021. HPOG recipients were postsecondary educational institutions, workforce development boards, state or local government agencies, and community-based organizations. Five of the 32 recipients in each round of HPOG were tribal organizations. HPOG 1.0 recipients enrolled over 38,000 individuals, and HPOG 2.0 recipients enrolled over 40,000.

The HPOG Program was designed with dual goals: to provide TANF recipients and other individuals with low incomes with opportunities for education and training that lead to employment and advancement in the health care workforce and to address the increasing shortfall in the supply of health care professionals in the face of expanding demand. HPOG recipients were required to partner with their state TANF agency, relevant local and state WIBs, and the state apprenticeship agency. Further, the recipients were expected to accomplish the following aims:

- Target skills and competencies demanded by the health care industry;
- Support career pathways, such as an articulated career ladder;
- Provide training that resulted in an employer or industry-recognized certificate or degree (including license, Registered Apprenticeship certificate, or degree);
- Combine supportive services with education and training services to help participants overcome barriers to employment, as necessary; and
- Provide training services at times and locations that are easily accessible to targeted populations.

More information about the HPOG Program is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/hpog>.

HPOG was authorized as a demonstration program with a mandated evaluation. OPRE's multipronged research and evaluation strategy is assessing the success of each round of the HPOG Program. The research and evaluation activities aim to provide information on program implementation, systems change, outcomes, and impact. The *HPOG 1.0 Impact Study*, *HPOG 1.0 National Implementation Evaluation (NIE) (HPOG 1.0 NIE)*, and *HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation* sections provide more information about these studies.

### ***HPOG 1.0 Impact Study***

The HPOG 1.0 Impact Study used an experimental design to examine the effect of the HPOG 1.0 Program on participants' educational and economic outcomes at 15, 36, and 72 months after random assignment. The evaluation aimed to identify which components of HPOG programs (e.g., types of support services, program structure, and training areas) contributed to participant success. The HPOG 1.0 Impact Study included 20 recipients that were not part of another study collecting individual-level data ("HPOG-only" recipients) as well as the 3 HPOG recipients being evaluated as part of the PACE project ("HPOG-PACE" recipients). As part of the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study, some recipients implemented a multi-arm experimental design that created two treatment arms—an "HPOG services as usual" treatment group and an "enhanced HPOG" treatment group that had access to an "enhanced" program component—as well as a control group that did not have access to HPOG. The following three program enhancements were implemented as part of the multi-arm experimental test: facilitated peer support groups, emergency assistance, and non-cash incentives. Approximately half of the recipients participated in an enhancement test.

The study was designed to address the following research questions:

- What impacts do the HPOG programs, as a group, have on the outcomes of participants and their families?
- To what extent do those impacts vary across selected subpopulations?
- Which locally adopted program components influence average impacts?
- To what extent does participation in a particular HPOG component (or components) change the impact on trainees?

The 20 HPOG-only recipients conducted random assignment from approximately March 2013 to November 2014. Over that period, 10,693 individuals were enrolled in the study, with 2 people assigned to the treatment group for every 1 person assigned to the control group. The HPOG-PACE recipients enrolled 3,100 individuals in the study, with 1 person assigned to the treatment group for every person assigned to the control group. The total sample size for the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study is 13,717. Approximately 13 percent of Impact Study participants reported receiving TANF at baseline (Peck et al., 2018).

The HPOG 1.0 Impact Study relied on the following key data sources:

- HPOG Performance Reporting System (PRS), a management information system used by all HPOG recipients to track recipient progress for program management and accountability and to record participant data for use in the evaluation;
- Recipient and staff/management surveys, designed and collected by the HPOG 1.0 NIE;
- Study participant information collected at baseline;
- Study participant follow-up surveys administered approximately at 15, 36, and 72 months after random assignment; and
- Employment and earnings administrative data from NDNH.

OPRE has published short, intermediate, and long-term impact findings. More information about the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/health->

[profession-opportunity-grants-hpog-impact-study-2011-2018.](#)

### ***HPOG 1.0 NIE***

HPOG 1.0 NIE assessed program implementation, systems change, and participant outcomes of the 27 non-tribal HPOG 1.0 programs.

The evaluation included three major components—a Descriptive Implementation Study, a Systems Change Analysis, and an Outcome Study—that addressed the following three major research questions, respectively:

- How are health professions training programs being implemented across the HPOG 1.0 recipient sites?
- What changes to the service delivery system are associated with program implementation?
- What individual-level outputs and outcomes occur?

To support the analyses, HPOG 1.0 NIE used surveys to collect data from recipient management and staff, stakeholders, employers, and participants. Additionally, the project used administrative data from HPOG PRS, NDNH, HPOG program management materials (e.g., grant applications), and national and local sources on local area labor markets.

More information on HPOG 1.0 NIE, including the design, interim, and final reports from the three major components of the study, is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-implementation-evaluation-health-profession-opportunity-grants-2012-2018>.

### ***HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation***

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation is rigorously assessing the HPOG programs administered by the non-tribal recipients awarded grants in 2015. The 27 non-tribal recipients operated 38 HPOG programs across 17 states. Across HPOG 2.0 programs, about 19 percent of participants reported receiving TANF at enrollment (Sick and Loprest, 2022).

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation includes three main components. The impact evaluation randomly assigned eligible participants to either a treatment group that has access to HPOG services or a control group that does not have access to HPOG but can receive other services available in the community (i.e., “business as usual”) to assess the impacts of the HPOG programs. The descriptive evaluation includes implementation, outcomes, and systems studies that will help interpret findings from the impact study. The descriptive study also includes in-depth qualitative interviews with a small sample of HPOG study participants. The cost-benefit analysis will assess the costs and benefits of a standard HPOG program.

Data sources for all three components of the National Evaluation include program data collected in the management information system used by all HPOG programs, administrative data from NDNH and the NSC, and participant follow-up surveys at approximately 15, 36, and 66 months after random assignment. In 2021, OPRE funded a 15-month follow-up survey of participants who enrolled in HPOG after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This effort will support assessments of the effectiveness of the HPOG 2.0 Program before and after the pandemic.

More information about the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation, including evaluation design and analysis plans, is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-evaluation-2nd-generation-health-profession-opportunity-grants-hpog-20>.

## **B. Grant Program Goals and Expectations**

The purpose of the Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants is to better understand the effectiveness of services funded by state TANF programs that aim to address the employment and self-sufficiency needs of adults receiving TANF or those eligible for or at risk of TANF receipt. Career pathways programs are one such service. TANF agencies may use TANF and MOE funds to support a range of benefits and services for low-income parents as part of a career pathways approach. These grants are intended to support rigorous, policy-relevant research of such approaches through secondary analysis of data sets from OPRE evaluations of career pathways programs—PACE, HPOG 1.0 Impact Study, HPOG 1.0 NIE, and HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation. The grants are an integral component of OPRE's multi-pronged career pathways portfolio, which is a key component of OPRE's broader portfolio of research and evaluation on TANF and family self-sufficiency.

Data from the PACE project, HPOG 1.0 Impact Study, HPOG 1.0 NIE, HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation, and qualitative data from in-depth participant interviews with HPOG 2.0 participants are available for secondary analysis through CFData (<https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org>). CFData is maintained by the Inter-university Consortium on Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. The archived data includes information collected through participant baseline and follow-up surveys, participant interviews, staff surveys, and program administrative records (where available). The archived data does not include administrative records from the NDNH or NSC.

De-identified data from the studies is available to researchers as restricted access files. Information about the process and requirements for accessing restricted access data through ICPSR is available at <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/ICPSR/access/restricted/>. Please note that providing a link to a non-Federal website in this NOFO does not constitute an endorsement by ACF or any of its employees of the sponsors of the website or the information or products presented on the site. ACF cannot attest to the accuracy of information provided by this link or any other linked sites on the website.

OPRE sponsored information about the data available for analysis, including codebooks and data dictionaries, is available for

- PACE at <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/archives/cfda/studies/37289>
- HPOG 1.0  
at <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/archives/cfda/studies/37290>
- HPOG 2.0  
at <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/archives/cfda/studies/38427>

Additional HPOG 2.0 data will be made available on a rolling basis in 2023 and beyond. A webinar on how to access and use the data is available

at <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/video-resources.html?categories=Career%20Pathways>.

The specific goals of the Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants are to:

- Deepen the understanding of the implementation and effectiveness of career pathways programs;
- Examine career pathways programs' effectiveness in meeting the goals and objectives in TANF's second statutory purpose—to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation and employment;
- Support research to inform and improve the design, implementation, delivery, and performance of related TANF-funded services related to career pathways, including career and technical education, occupational training, adult basic skills education, and supportive services;
- Augment OPRE's multi-pronged evaluation of career pathways programs by focusing on questions relevant to TANF agencies and other providers of career pathways programs for individuals with low incomes; and
- Address issues of current relevance to inform policy decisions at the local, state, and national levels related to career pathways programs for TANF recipients and individuals with low incomes.

Proposed studies may have a substantive or methodological focus and may seek to answer specific questions or address broader research topics of interest relevant to the goals delineated above. Proposed studies may focus on particular PACE programs or include multiple PACE or HPOG programs. Proposed studies may focus on specific groups of study participants, including TANF recipients and non-TANF recipients, to further understand strategies that are effective for serving various population groups. Proposals should reflect careful consideration and selection of a research topic that is suitable for secondary analysis with the available career pathways data. Proposals may merge additional secondary datasets, if feasible and appropriate, but analyses should be limited to secondary data.

The proposed approach and analytic methods should be rigorous, appropriate, and sufficient for addressing the proposed research question(s). The approach should demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the methodological options and trade-offs that must be considered and addressed to conduct analyses and complete the project on schedule resulting in high-quality, useful products. OPRE is interested in supporting the use of innovative methods and state-of-the-art analytic techniques that can substantially enhance the quality of the research or save time or other resources.

The expected findings should benefit the TANF and family self-sufficiency, postsecondary education and training, career and technical education, and employment research fields in terms of the potential to advance knowledge of career pathways for TANF recipients and other adults with low incomes. Further, the expected results should address issues of current relevance to TANF agencies and decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels to inform policy decisions and solutions. OPRE is also interested in methodological topics that leverage the rigorous design and variable contexts and components of the programs included in the PACE and HPOG data sets. Such topics may include, but are not limited to, testing innovative statistical

methods in causal inference or advancing methods to identify contextual and other factors that may account for variation in program effects. OPRE is additionally interested in projects that seek to understand whether and how career pathways programs can improve equity within the labor market.

### **C. Additional Project Requirements**

The roles and responsibilities of the recipients include the following:

- Participating in in-person recipient meetings with the federal project officer (FPO), other federal partners, and interested parties (up to one annually);
- Participating in quarterly phone calls with the FPO;
- Working with the FPO to finalize research questions and analytic plans that will contribute to the TANF, family self-sufficiency, education and training, and employment research fields and practice;
- Implementing the study, including data analysis; interpretation; and writing all papers, briefs, or reports; and
- Discussing with the FPO plans for publishing or presenting research findings.

When issuing statements, press releases, publications, requests for proposal, bid solicitations, and other documents—such as toolkits, resource guides, websites, and presentations (hereafter, “statements”)—describing the projects or programs funded in whole, or in part, with HHS federal funds, the recipient must clearly state the following:

- the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the program or project funded with federal money; and,
- the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program funded by non-governmental sources.

When issuing statements resulting from activities supported by HHS financial assistance, the recipient entity must include an acknowledgment of federal assistance using the following or a similar statement.

If the HHS Grant or Cooperative Agreement is **NOT** funded with other non-governmental sources: "This [project/publication/program/website, etc.] [is/was] supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$XX with 100 percent funded by ACF/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit the ACF website at [Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#)."

### **Meeting Attendance**

The Principal Investigator(s) must attend and present at two meetings with all Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants recipients. These meetings will be held in 2024 and 2025 in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and will last approximately 1½ days each. Only principal investigators are required to attend, but applicants may budget for additional key project staff to attend if desired. The purpose of these meetings will be to support the planning, implementation, and coordination of the research projects undertaken by the Career Pathways Secondary Data

Analysis Grants recipients. In addition, the Principal Investigators will participate in quarterly conference calls with the FPO to communicate their progress.

### **COVID-19 Response**

If, during the pandemic, OPRE and/or recipients are required to adjust project requirements due to COVID-19, OPRE will exercise flexibilities as appropriate and in accordance with applicable laws. For example, convenings may be conducted virtually or timelines may be modified in consultation with OPRE.

### **Subawards**

ACF expects applicants to consider whether subcontracts or subawards are part of their planned activities. The following guidance applies to grantee oversight of subawards:

Recipients under this grant program may opt to transfer a portion of substantive programmatic work to other organizations through subaward(s). The prime recipient must maintain a substantive role in the project. ACF defines a substantive role as conducting activities and/or providing services funded under the award that are necessary and integral to the completion of the project. Subrecipient monitoring activities alone as specified in 45 CFR § 75.352 do not constitute a substantive role. Furthermore, ACF does not fund awards where the role of the applicant is primarily to serve as a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

Subrecipient(s) must meet the eligibility requirements identified in the *NOFO, Section III.1. Eligible Applicants*. Additionally, all subrecipient(s) must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) assigned by the System for Award Management (SAM), if they do not already have one. Prime recipients are required to check SAM to verify that the subrecipient(s) is/are not debarred, suspended, or ineligible. Please reference the [Award Term and Condition on Subawards](#) on the [ACF Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#) website for further requirements involving subawards.

### **D. References**

- Kevin S. Dubina, Janie-Lynn Kim, Javier Colato, and Michael J. Rieley, "Projections overview and highlights, 2021–31," *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, November 2022, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2022.28>
- Fein, D. (2012). *Career Pathways as a Framework for Program Design and Evaluation: A Working Paper from the Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) Project*, OPRE Report 2012-30, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Gardiner, K. and R. Juras. (2019). *PACE Cross-Program Implementation and Impact Study Findings*, OPRE Report 2019-32, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Peck, Laura R., Alan Werner, Eleanor Harvill, Daniel Litwok, Shawn Moulton, Alyssa Rulf Fountain, and Gretchen Locke. (2018). *Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 1.0) Impact Study Interim Report: Program Implementation and Short-Term*

*Impacts*, OPRE Report 2018-16a. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- Nathan Sick and Pamela Loprest. (2022). *Health Profession Opportunity Grants 2.0: Final Annual Report*, OPRE Report 2022-228. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Werner, A., Dun Rappaport, C., Bagnell Stuart, J., & Lewis, J. (2013). *Literature Review: Career Pathways Programs*, OPRE Report #2013-24, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Torpey, Elka. "Education level and projected openings, 2019–29," *Career Outlook*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2020.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance (2016). Information Memorandum No. TANF-ACF-IM-2016-05, *Supporting Career Pathways for TANF Recipients*. Available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/policy-guidance/tanf-acf-im-2016-05-supporting-career-pathways-tanf-recipients>.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of TANF Recipients, Fiscal Year 2020." Available at: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofa/fy2020\\_characteristics\\_data\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofa/fy2020_characteristics_data_final.pdf).

## II. Federal Award Information

**Funding Instrument Type:**

G (Grant)

**Estimated Total Funding:**

\$400,000

**Expected Number of Awards:**

4

**Award Ceiling:**

\$100,000

Per Budget Period

**Award Floor:**

\$90,000

Per Budget Period

**Average Projected Award Amount:**

\$100,000

Per Budget Period

**Anticipated Project Start Date:**

09/30/2023

**Length of Project Periods:**

24-month project period with two 12-month budget periods

### **Additional Information on Project Periods and Explanation of 'Other'**

#### **Additional Information on Awards:**

**Awards made under this funding opportunity are subject to the availability of federal funds.**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** For more information on these requirements, see *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching*.

Applicants are expected to submit applications for the full 24-month project period to ensure adequate time for project activities. Applications that are less than 24 months are not sufficient to meet the project goals, including accessing the restricted-use data, cleaning and analyzing the data, and disseminating findings. Non-competing continuation awards for the second 12-month budget period will be required and are subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress by the grant recipient, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the federal government. Satisfactory project performance and progress is judged, in part, on information provided in semi-annual progress reports. This includes, but is not limited to, adhering to the timeline for completing the future activities (aligned with the written description of planned activities), maintaining the research quality and methods originally proposed, and providing a detailed description of any changes in the activities and/or timeline from what was originally proposed. **During the first budget period, applicants will receive instructions on how to submit non-competing continuation applications to request funds for the second budget period.**

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **III.1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligibility under the Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants NOFO is defined under section 413 of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 613. The statutory authorities for this funding opportunity do not limit eligible entities to receive this funding.

ACF encourages tribally controlled land grant colleges and universities, historically Black colleges and universities, and Hispanic-serving institutions to apply. Additionally, any other institutions with the research capacity and interest in the focus of the grant are welcome to apply.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity. Faith-based organizations may apply for this award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at and, subject to the protections and requirements of 45 CFR Part 87 and 42 U.S.C. 2000bb *et seq.*, ACF will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, affiliation, or exercise.

### **Reference to Legal Status**

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

## **III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement:

No

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

**For awards that require matching by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by a recipient or subrecipient and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the recipient will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NoA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

## **III.3. Other**

### **Application Disqualification Factors**

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding

opportunity.

### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

### **Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at Grants.gov. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.**

Applicants that do not have an internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "[ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission.](#)"

### **Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)**

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 pm ET on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.** Electronic applications submitted to Grants.gov after 11:59 pm ET on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. That is, applications submitted to Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

Applications submitted to Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via Grants.gov, the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 pm ET on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.** Paper applications received

after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.**

#### **Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this NOFO.

### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

#### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

OPRE Review Team:  
Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants  
c/o ICF International  
1902 Reston Metro Plaza  
Reston  
VA  
20190  
877-350-5913  
703-934-3740  
CPDataGrants@icf.com

#### **Application Packages**

#### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the NOFO's listing at Grants.gov.

#### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the NOFO's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to Grants.gov.

#### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

### **IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

#### **FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS**

**Each applicant applying electronically via Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding SFs and Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be**

**removed. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.**

***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:***

**Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)**

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

**Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

**Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

**Accepted Font Style**

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read comfortably, will be removed.

**English Language**

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

**Page Limitations**

**Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:." Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**All applications must be double-spaced.** An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have extra pages removed, and those pages will not be reviewed.

**Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements**

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing

requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

### **Adherence to NOFO Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's NOFO formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review and will not be made available to reviewers.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

**NOTE:** Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's NOFO formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

### **Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications**

When applicants make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all SFs and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

### **Signatures**

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

### **Accepted Application Format**

With the exception of the required SFs and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

### **PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:**

**Applicants must limit their *entire* application (including the Project Description and Appendices) to 85 pages.** The required SFs, assurances, and certifications do not count toward the 85-page limit. It is strongly encouraged that the Project Description is organized according to the sections presented below. Additional headers and sub-headers may also be used to organize the content of each section.

The Project Description (File 1) must include the following:

1. Table of Contents
2. Project Summary/Abstract
3. Approach
  1. Background and Significance
  2. Research Questions
  3. Research Design and Data Analysis Plan
  4. Staffing and Management Plan
  5. Plan for Protection of Sensitive Information
  6. Dissemination Plan
  7. References
4. Project Timelines and Milestones
5. Project Budget and Budget Justification

The Appendices (File 2) must include the following:

1. Organizational Capacity
  1. Biographical Sketches/Curricula Vitae (CV) for all key personnel
  2. Job Descriptions for each vacant key position (if applicable)
  3. Organizational Chart
2. Plan for Oversight of Federal Funds
3. Third Party Agreements (if applicable)
4. Legal Status of Applicant Entity

### **ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have received an

exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

**Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.**

**File One:** Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

**File Two:** Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

### **Adherence to the Two-File Requirement**

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

### **Application Upload Requirements**

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Acrobat Reader software will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Acrobat Reader they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" at the top bar menu and select "Adobe Software Compatibility", which is listed under "Applicant Resources." The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test Workspace PDF form. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions for use, if an applicant is unable to open the test form.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants on filling out a Workspace PDF form. In addition, it addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

### **Required SFs and OMB-approved Forms**

SFs and OMB-approved forms are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required SFs, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

### **Naming Application Submission Files**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by Grants.gov. Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces).** Please also see

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

### **Use only file formats supported by ACF**

Applicants must submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDFs in order to comply with the two-file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

### **ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

### **Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete, and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

### **FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "*ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*" at [www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6).

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single NOFO, or multiple applications

under separate NOFOs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled with the NOFO title and Funding Opportunity Number.

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the NOFO's Synopsis on Grants.gov under the Package tab.

Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

**Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

**Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications**

**Applicants seeking an award under this funding opportunity must submit the listed SFs, assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required SFs, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this NOFO at Grants.gov.

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)	Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview and Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Form is available at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a> .  General information about the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations can be obtained at <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/</a> . Applicants may also contact OHRP by email ( <a href="mailto:OHRP@HHS.gov">OHRP@HHS.gov</a> ) or by phone (240-453-6900).
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
<p>Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>Required of all applicants.</p> <p>Applicants must have a UEI and maintain an active SAM registration throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>Obtain a UEI and SAM registration at: <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p><i>See Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) for more information.</i></p>
<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.</p>	<p>Required for all applications.</p>
<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p>	<p>Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>	<p>Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.</p>
<p>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non- Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs</p>	<p>Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. SFs must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.</p>	<p>Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.</p>

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes/Description
	By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.	
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

Additional Required Assurances and Certifications

**Mandatory Grant Disclosure**

All applicants and recipients are required to submit, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR § 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

**And to:**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

**Fax:** (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or

**Email:** [grantdisclosures@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:grantdisclosures@oig.hhs.gov)

**Non-Federal Reviewers**

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applications are submitted electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review process.

**The Project Description**

**The Project Description Overview**

**General Expectations and Instructions**

The Project Description provides the information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for financial assistance. It must address all activities for which federal funds are being requested and all application requirements as stated in this section. The Project Description must explain how the project will meet the purpose of the NOFO, as described in *Section I. Program Description*. As a reminder, reviewers will be evaluating this section in accordance with *Section V.1. Criteria*.

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length.

Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the application.

**Letter of Intent**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this funding opportunity. Please submit a letter of intent by the deadline date listed in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. The letter of intent should include the following information: number and title of this funding opportunity; the name and address of the applicant organization; and the name, phone number, fax number and email address of a contact person.

Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. **The letter of intent is optional.** Failure to submit a letter of intent **will not**

impact eligibility to submit an application and **will not** disqualify an application from competitive review.

Letters of intent should be submitted via e-mail to [CPDataGrants@icf.com](mailto:CPDataGrants@icf.com) or mailed to the following physical address. Email is the preferred submission method for all letters of intent.

OPRE Review Team

Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants

c/o ICF International

1902 Reston Metro Plaza

Reston, VA 20190

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents may be single spaced.

### **Project Summary**

Provide a summary of the application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Website Address, if applicable

The Project Summary must be single-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

### **Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

#### **Non-Profit Organizations**

#### **Proof of Non-Profit Status Options:**

#### **Option 1: 501(c)(3) and non-501(c)(3) non-profit organizations are eligible**

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

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.

- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the application submission.

### **For-Profits and Small Businesses**

For-profit organizations (including small businesses) applying for funding must submit the following to provide proof of their legal status: Documentation establishing the power granted to the entity to enter into contractual relationships and/or accept awards (i.e., articles of incorporation, bylaws).

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

Describe, in detail, the **technical approach** for addressing the issues and achieving the objectives identified. Clearly describe the research questions, sample, data sources, measures and indicators, and analytic strategy. Explain how they are **appropriate and sufficient** for addressing the goals, objectives, and research questions addressed in the study. Discuss the **strengths and limitations** of each aspect of the design; cite relevant methodological literature as appropriate. The following information should be included:

**1. Background and Significance.** Applicants must demonstrate their understanding of critical issues and existing knowledge in the field of TANF, career pathways, and employment and training policy research and describe their objectives and the overall significance of the proposal. Applicants should incorporate the following information:

1. *Literature review.* A concise yet thorough literature review, justifying the proposed study and the outcomes of interest. Applicants are required to briefly discuss previous studies related to the proposed study, including PACE and HPOG studies, and identify gaps in the literature. Applicants are expected to cite relevant, current literature related to this topic.
2. *Theoretical framework.* The applicants must discuss the underlying theoretical framework of career pathways programs and how this relates to the project goals.
3. *Significance.* Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will address issues of significance related to career pathways programs for TANF recipients and other adults with low incomes; how it is related to the goals of the Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants (listed in *Section I., Project Description*); and how it addresses key gaps in the field. Applicants are expected to connect their research proposal to critical public policy and programmatic questions to help TANF practitioners, policymakers, and

researchers. Applicants must explain how the proposed project is innovative in its analysis of secondary data.

**2. Research Questions.** Applicants should state concisely the goals of the proposed project; and summarize the expected outcome(s), including how the results of the proposed research will advance understanding of TANF-funded career pathways programs and research. The applicants must list the proposed research questions, as well as discuss how they relate to career pathways program goals and TANF's second statutory purpose—to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation and employment. The applicant must also discuss the hypothesized results of the study, using findings from the current literature to justify the hypothesized results.

**3. Research Design and Data Analysis Plan.** The applicant must demonstrate that they have a strong research design. Applicants are expected to make a clear connection between the proposed research questions and the planned data analysis strategy that will be used, illustrating that the methods are appropriate to address the proposed research questions. Applicants should include the following information:

1. *Data sources.* Identify and describe the dataset(s) that will be used and explain how the dataset is appropriate for the proposed project. Describe the nature and scope, including the sample or population, of each dataset. Provide results of any preliminary analyses for the proposed project, including tables of descriptive statistics. If applicable, describe the procedures that will be used to link datasets.
2. *Sample.* Describe the proposed study sample, how it will be constructed, and how it relates to the population of interest.
3. *Measures.* The applicant is required to delineate the specific data elements and measures that will be used to address the proposed research questions and demonstrate that the measures are appropriate to answer the proposed research questions. The applicant should demonstrate that the needed data elements and measures are available in the chosen data set.
4. *Proposed Analytic Strategy.* Provide a detailed plan describing the analytic approaches, statistical techniques, and methods of inference that will be used to analyze and interpret the data. The plan should provide results of power analyses, demonstrating that the sample size will be sufficient to detect effects using the proposed analytic techniques. The plan should clearly detail how missing data will be handled, as well as clearly describe how the proposed method is suitable for the analyses.
5. *Limitations.* The applicant must specify potential limitations of the proposed study design. These may include potential limitations of the proposed data sources or of the analytic strategy.

**4. Staffing and Management Plan.** The applicant must provide a description of the key staff that will oversee the proposed project, including the proposed level of effort and their availability. The applicant must illustrate how the proposed staff have the necessary experience (e.g., skills, training, and substantive and/or technical expertise) to execute the proposed project and produce high-quality products. A description of the Principal Investigator and/or Project Director's previous experience managing grants or projects similar in size and scope is strongly recommended. The Principal Investigator must have earned a doctorate or equivalent in a relevant field, must conduct research as a primary professional responsibility, and must have an

article published or accepted for publication in at least one major peer-reviewed journal as a first or second author, as evidenced in their curriculum vitae and/or biographical sketch. A strong management plan will also include a plan for achieving the objectives of the study on time, and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing key tasks.

**5. Plan for the Protection of Sensitive Information.** Applicants should confirm their willingness and ability to comply with any requirements for accessing restricted-use data sets. Applicants must describe the steps that will be taken to safeguard the data and reduce the risk of reidentification. In addition, applicants must describe how the proposed project will provide for adequate protection of human subjects and describe the process by which Human Subjects Certification/Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval will be obtained, if not already obtained, for the project.

**6. Dissemination Plan.** Applicants must provide a dissemination plan in which the applicant thoroughly describes how findings will be disseminated to a wide audience, including, but not limited to, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the TANF, and family self-sufficiency, career pathways, post-secondary education and training, and/or employment fields. Applicants must describe the intended audiences for different types of dissemination products, and the vehicle(s) that will be used to reach each audience, including conferences, presentations, and publications. Applicants must clearly state how their dissemination plan encompasses both research and policy/program-oriented products. Applicants should demonstrate willingness to engage in dissemination activities in coordination with other recipients. (This section is intended to provide more specific guidance on applicants' dissemination plans. See **Dissemination Plan** later in this section for additional instructions and guidance.)

**7. References.** Applicants must include a list of references for any resources that are cited within the application using a commonly accepted citation format (e.g., American Psychological Association, Modern Language Association).

### **Project Timeline and Milestones**

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections (for the entire project period) of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

### **Organizational Capacity**

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts.
- Curricula Vitae (CV).
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description).

- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this funding opportunity.
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners, contractors and/or subrecipients, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively.

If known at the time of application submission, the applicant must disclose their intent to enter into subaward arrangements in their application. For each proposed subaward, the applicant must include a description of the work to be performed by the subrecipient(s).

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities**

Recipients are required to ensure proper oversight in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D.

These regulations set forth the following standards for effective oversight:

- Financial and Program Management
- Property (if applicable by program legislation)
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance

Describe the framework (e.g., governance, policies and procedures, risk management, systems) in place to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. The description must include: system(s) for record-keeping and financial management; procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues (e.g., audit findings, continuous program performance assessment findings, program monitoring); and those key staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff, and, if applicable, partner(s) and/or subrecipient(s).

### **Dissemination Plan**

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended, and
- The timeline for dissemination.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment and MOUs must both clearly describe the roles and

responsibilities for project activities and the support and/or resources that the third-party (i.e., subrecipient, contractor, or other cooperating entity) is committing. The Letters of Commitment and MOUs must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements.

Applicants must provide Letters of Commitment or MOUs between recipients and third-parties (i.e., subrecipients, contractors, or other cooperating entities). In addition to clearly describing the roles and responsibilities for project activities and support and/or resources that the third-party is committing, these agreements must detail work schedules and estimated remuneration with an understanding that a finalized agreement will be negotiated once the successful applicant is awarded the grant.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information SF, either SF- 424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If cost sharing or matching is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

**Special Note:** *The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2022 and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this funding opportunity may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. For the Executive Level II salary, please see "Executive & Senior Level Employee Pay Tables" under <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>. The salary limitation reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits, indirect costs and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the SF-424A and/or SF-424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project.

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for each year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Applicants are reminded that the award ceiling reflects the total costs, including both direct and indirect costs.

Applicants need to budget for travel to two in-person meetings, including the project kickoff and an additional meeting in the second year of the grant. Both meetings will likely take place in Washington, DC. Applicants must budget for the Principal Investigator to attend in person. Any other key members of the team that the applicant thinks will likely need to attend should be included in the budget. OPRE will exercise flexibility as needed and may conduct meetings virtually or modify timelines.

For applicants proposing to use subaward(s), if the total amount budgeted for subawards exceeds 50 percent of total direct costs for the budget period, the applicant must justify subawarding the portion of the project and must explain how the prime recipient plans to maintain a substantive role in the project. Applicants must explain why the participation of the subrecipient is necessary, and why the applicant cannot achieve the objectives without the subrecipient(s)' participation.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the project budget and budget justification. The budget justification includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail. Applications should only include allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

## **Personnel**

**Description:** Costs of employee salaries and wages. See 45 CFR § 75.430 for more information on allowable personnel costs. Do not include the personnel costs of consultants, contractors and subrecipients under this category.

**Justification:** For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

## **Fringe Benefits**

**Description:** Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR § 75.431. Do not include the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients.

Typically, fringe benefit amounts are determined by applying a calculated rate for a particular class of employee (full-time or part-time) to the salary and wages requested. Fringe rates are often specified in the approved indirect cost rate agreement. Fringe benefits may be treated as a direct cost or indirect cost in accordance with the applicant's accounting practices. Only fringe benefits as a direct cost should be entered under this category.

**Justification:** Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act taxes, retirement, taxes, etc.

## **Travel**

**Description:** Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence) by employees of the applicant organization who are in travel status on official business. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the Contractual line item. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the Other line. Travel costs should be developed in accordance with the applicant's travel policies and 45 CFR § 75.474.

**Justification:** For each trip show: the total number of travelers; travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/recipient orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

## **Equipment**

**Description:** "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.) See 45 CFR §75.439 for more information.

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

## **Supplies**

**Description:** Costs of all tangible personal property, other than included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000. See 45 CFR § 75.453 for more information.

**Justification:** Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

## **Contractual**

**Description:** Cost of all contracts and subawards except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation

contracts, if applicable, and contract or subawards with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Costs related to individual consultants should be listed on the Other line. Recipients are required to use 45 CFR §§ 75.326-.340 procurement procedures, and subawards are subject to the requirements at 45 CFR §§ 75.351-.353.

**Justification:** Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in 48 CFR § 2.101(b). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Indicate whether the proposed agreement qualifies as a subaward or contract in accordance with 45 CFR § 75.351. Provide the name of the contractor/subrecipient (if known), a description of anticipated services, a justification for why they are necessary, a breakdown of estimated costs, and an explanation of the selection process. In addition, for subawards, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each subaward, by entity name, along with the same justifications referred to in these budget and budget justification instructions.

## Other

**Description:** Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel, insurance, food (when allowable), medical and dental costs (non-personnel), professional service costs (including audit charges), space and equipment rentals, printing and publications, computer use, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs. Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

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

## Indirect Charges

**Description:** Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1. The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by HHS or another cognizant federal agency.

**Justification:** An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the objective review or award selection process.

2. Per 45 CFR § 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, "any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis*

rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time."

**Justification:** This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent *de minimis* rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

**Description:** Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

**For all federal awards**, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR § 75.306.

**For awards that require matching or cost sharing by statute**, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute**, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NoA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in the approved budget in the NoA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

**Justification:** If an applicant is relying on cost share or match from a third-party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required

to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards).

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this funding opportunity.

### **Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 03/31/2025. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## **Application Submission Options**

### **Electronic Submission via Grants.gov**

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

### **Electronic Delivery**

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

### **How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov**

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have an active System for Award (SAM) registration which provides a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registration may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entities ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions

here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

**Register with SAM:** All organizations (entities) applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For detailed

instructions for registering with SAM, refer

to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

**Create a Grants.gov Account:** The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions provided on the registration page.

**Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:** A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant). If you work for or consult with multiple organizations, you can have a profile for each organization under one Grants.gov account. In such cases, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant profiles. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI for the organization in the UEI field. For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

**EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:** After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC is then expected to log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

**Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; this step is often missed and is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

### **How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each NOFO, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

For an overview of applying on Grants.gov using Workspaces, refer

to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

**Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

**Complete a Workspace:** Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

**Adobe Reader:** If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

**NOTE:** Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

**Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

**Complete SF-424 Fields First:** These forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and SAM UEI. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

**Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through Workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

**Track a Workspace:** After successfully submitting a Workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For questions related to the specific funding opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking and understanding background information on the issue.

### **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

All applications must be received by 11:59 pm ET on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgment of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the

application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application.

Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet connections should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Therefore, applicants should allow enough time to prepare and submit the application before the package closing date.

Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received submission message in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role.

### **Issues with Federal Systems**

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "[Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues](#)" document for complete guidance.

### **Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

To request an exemption from required electronic submission, please refer to ACF's "[Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission](#)" document for complete guidance.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* of this funding opportunity for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 pm ET on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this funding opportunity.

## **IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)**

All applicants must have a UEI and an active registration with SAM (<https://www.sam.gov>) prior to applying to a funding opportunity.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, the SAM registration must be active throughout the life of the award. Your SAM registration must be renewed every 365 days to keep it active.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e., Grants.gov.**

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of their efforts to request a UEI, register for, or renew a registration, at SAM.

Please see the “Help” tab at <https://sam.gov/content/help> for more information and assistance with this process.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency to:

- Be registered in SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV;
- Provide its UEI in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV; and
- Ensure any proposed subrecipient(s) have obtained and provided to the recipient their UEI(s) prior to making any subawards (**Note:** Subrecipients are not required to complete full SAM registration.).

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### **IV.4. Submission Dates and Times**

##### **Due Date for Letter of Intent**

Number of Days from Publication 25

04/29/2023

##### **Due Date for Applications**

06/29/2023

#### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via Grants.gov is 11:59 pm ET on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 am ET on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via Grants.gov are available at:  
[www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

Applications submitted to Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 pm ET on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Hand-delivered applications must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 am ET and 4:30 pm ET Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays).

Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and funding under this funding opportunity.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 pm ET on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 pm ET on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

### **Emergency Extensions**

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

## **Acknowledgement of Received Application**

### **Acknowledgement from Grants.gov**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of the application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations.

Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

### **Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:**

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

## **IV.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this funding opportunity with regard to E.O. 12372.

## **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR § 75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR § 75.460)

Pre-award costs are not allowable.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this award.

Major renovation is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant program.

## **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at [www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6).

### **Submission by Mail**

OPRE Review Team  
Career Pathways Secondary Data Analysis Grants  
c/o ICF International  
1902 Reston Metro Plaza  
Reston  
VA  
20190

### **Hand Delivery**

Same as Above

### **Electronic Submission**

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via Grants.gov.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **V.1. Criteria**

**Please note:** With the exception of the notice of funding opportunity and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers must not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers must not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers must evaluate

and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and must not refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of this funding opportunity.

### **Background and Significance**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Presents a literature review that is current, concise, and supports the study rationale;
- Discusses previous studies relevant to the proposed study, including OPRE’s career pathways and TANF and family self-sufficiency research portfolios, and identifies key gaps in the literature related to the proposed study;
- Discusses the underlying framework for career pathways programs and provides a strong justification for how the framework relates to the project goals and research questions; and
- Includes compelling discussion of how the proposal addresses issues of significance related to career pathways programs for TANF recipients and other adults with low incomes.

### **Research Question**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Proposes research questions that are clearly defined and appropriately linked to career pathways goals and issues in the career pathways field;
- Discusses hypothesized results that are situated in current literature; and
- Describes how the proposed research questions and hypothesized results will advance current knowledge, including knowledge already generated under PACE and/or HPOG evaluations, to inform specific program and/or policy decisions.

### **Research Design and Data Analysis Plan**

**Maximum Points: 20**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Identifies and describes the dataset(s) that will be used and how the dataset(s) is appropriate for the proposed research;
- Clearly articulates the proposed study sample, how it will be constructed from the dataset, and how the proposed sample relates to the population of interest;
- Specifies the specific data elements and measures that will be used, along with how the measures relate to the proposed research questions;
- Details a strong and innovative analytical approach to answering the proposed research questions by clearly describing state-of-the-art statistical techniques and methods that

will be used to analyze and interpret the data and why the proposed methods are best suited for the analyses;

- Includes a power analysis demonstrating that there is sufficient power to detect effects;
- Provides a detailed plan for how missing data will be handled; and
- Discusses potential challenges to completing the project as described and proposes solutions to addressing those challenges.

### **Protection of Sensitive Information**

**Maximum Points: 15**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the requirements involved in gaining access to and using the proposed restricted-access data;
- Provides detailed steps that will be taken to safeguard the data and reduce the risk of reidentification; and
- Proposes a design and data analytic plan that provides for adequate protection of human subjects, the confidentiality of data, and consent issues related to the use of datasets, as well as how IRB approval/human subjects certification will be obtained for the project.

### **Staffing and Management Plan**

**Maximum Points: 20**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Demonstrates that the Principal Investigator(s) has/have the requisite educational and professional credentials, skills, and experience to lead the project;
- Demonstrates that the Principal Investigator(s) and other key staff possess the research and technical expertise and time commitment necessary to conduct the project, including relevant experience on research projects similar in scope or substance to the project described;
- Provides a clear organizational chart for the proposed project team;
- Describes an adequate management plan for achieving the objectives of the study on time, within budget, and with high quality, including clearly defined responsibilities, realistic timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (see *Section IV.2. Project Description: Project Timeline and Milestones*); and
- Clearly describes how the Principal Investigator(s) and other key staff will communicate with OPRE effectively throughout the course of the project.

### **Dissemination Plan**

**Maximum Points: 15**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Describes an approach to maximize the applicability of findings through dissemination activities;
- Identifies appropriate distribution channels and formats to reach the intended audience(s);
- Includes an effective plan for the dissemination (including conferences, presentations, and publications) and utilization of information by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field;

- Demonstrates a willingness to coordinate dissemination activities with other recipients and other components of OPRE’s career pathways and TANF and family self-sufficiency research portfolios.

**Budget and Budget Significance**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the applicant:

- Provides specific work plan(s), qualified and experienced personnel, and functional budget systems that are responsible for maintaining financial records (see *Section IV.2. Project Description: Plan for Oversight of Federal Funds*);
- Proposes project costs that are reasonable and sufficient to accomplish the objectives, research design, and dissemination plan;
- Proposes project costs that include funds for the Project Director or Principal Investigator to participate in up to two annual grant recipient meetings in the Washington, DC metropolitan area;
- Provides a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and provides a detailed justification for the amount requested.

**V.2. Review and Selection Process**

No grant award will be made under this funding opportunity on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant that does not have a UEI and an active SAM registration. See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

**Initial ACF Screening**

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this NOFO.

**Objective Review and Results**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this funding opportunity. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process. If identified in *Section I. Program Description*, ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. In addition, ACF reserves the right to evaluate applications in the larger context of the overall portfolio by considering geographic distribution

of federal funds (e.g., ensuring coverage of states, counties, or service areas) in its pre-award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. In addition, ACF may elect to not allow a prime recipient to subaward if there is any indication that they are unable to properly monitor and manage subrecipients.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested.

OPRE will conduct an administrative review of the applications and results of the competitive review panels and will make recommendations for funding to the Director of OPRE, taking into account the goals, objectives and priorities of the grant program as listed in *Section I. Program Description*. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Administration is responsible for the final decision.

Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on: (1) the ranked order of applicants resulting from the competitive review, (2) staff review and consultations, (3) the availability of funding, and (4) the best interests of the federal government.

Government agencies generally define plagiarism as the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. Any suspected plagiarism will be reported to the applicant organization and HHS, Office of Inspector General for investigation.

### **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants**

ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), [www.fapiis.gov/](http://www.fapiis.gov/), before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in [45 CFR § 75.205\(a\)\(2\) Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants](#).

### **Non-Federal Reviewers Reference**

Please refer to *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* of this funding opportunity for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval in the objective review process, but not selected for award may receive funding if additional funds become available in the current Fiscal Year. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a NoA that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via email or by GrantSolutions, or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant.

Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*, if applicable. Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk.

Recipients may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the recipient's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the recipient must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

### **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Awards issued under this funding opportunity are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards currently in effect or implemented during the period of award, other Department regulations and policies in effect at the time of award, and applicable statutory provisions. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov). Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: [www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements).

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute or imply compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

Please review all HHS regulatory provisions for Termination at 2 CFR § 200.340.

## **HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the NoA. The HHS GPS is available at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-post-award-requirements#book\\_content\\_0](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-post-award-requirements#book_content_0).

## **Equal Treatment of Faith-Based Organizations**

A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the federal government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom, nondiscrimination, and conscience protections in federal law, including the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (42 U.S.C. 2000bb *et seq.*), the Coats-Snowe Amendment (42 U.S.C. 238n), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e–1(a) and 2000e–2(e)), Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12113(d)(2), section 1553 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18113), the Weldon Amendment (e.g., Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, Public Law 116–94, 133 Stat. 2534, 2607, div. A, sec. 507(d) (Dec. 20, 2019)), or any related or similar federal laws or regulations. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

Consistent with 45 CFR § 87.3(b), a faith-based organization that receives direct financial assistance from HHS may not engage in any explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the HHS awarding agency. Such an organization, whether faith-based or not, also shall not, in providing services funded by HHS, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice, as provided in 45 CFR § 87.3(d).

## ***Human Subjects Research***

If the proposed project involves research activities involving human subjects, the applicant must comply with the HHS regulations at 45 CFR part 46 regarding the protection of human research subjects, unless the activities are exempt as specified in the regulation.

Before engaging in ACF-supported human subjects research, an institution must:

1. Hold or obtain a Federalwide Assurance (FWA) approved by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP); and
2. Certify to ACF that the research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB designated in the FWA, and will be subject to continuing review by an IRB.

As referenced in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications*, applicants proposing to conduct research activities with human subjects must submit the form *Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)* with the application package; if the information is not available at the time of application,

it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.  
For more information, see <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html>.

### **VI.3. Reporting**

Performance Progress Reports:  
Semi-Annually

#### **Reporting Requirements**

Recipients under this funding opportunity will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at [www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2).

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this funding opportunity are as follows:

Financial Reports:  
Semi-Annually

### **VII. HHS Award Agency Contact(s)**

#### **Program Office Contact**

Siri  
Warkentien  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation  
330 C Street SW  
Washington  
DC  
20201  
202-690-0483  
[siri.warkentien@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:siri.warkentien@acf.hhs.gov)

#### **Office of Grants Management Contact**

Bridget  
Shea Westfall  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Grants Management  
330 C Street SW  
Washington  
DC  
20201  
202-401-5542  
[bridget.sheawestfall@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:bridget.sheawestfall@acf.hhs.gov)

#### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## VIII. Other Information

### Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) [www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/).

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecasts and NOFOs [www.grants.gov/](http://www.grants.gov/).

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-apply-grant>.

ACF Property Guidance <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/real-property-and-tangible-personal-property>

Grants.gov Accessibility Information [www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

ACF Guidance on FFATA <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-for-federal-financial-accountability-and-transparency>

ACF/OPRE Career Pathways Research Portfolio <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/career-pathways>.

ACF/OPRE TANF and Family Self-Sufficiency Research

Portfolio: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/topic/self-sufficiency-welfare-employment>.

ACF/OFA State TANF Information <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/temporary-assistance-needy-families-tanf>.

ACF/OFA HPOG Program Information <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/hpog>.

CFData <https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org>.

ICPSR "Accessing Restricted Data at ICPSR"

<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/ICPSR/access/restricted/>

CFData Career Pathways webinar

<https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/video-resources.html?categories=Career%20Pathways>

For information and requirements regarding research activities involving human subjects:  
<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html>

### Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
<p>Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification / IRB Certification / Declaration of Exemption (Common Rule)</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>. See <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/forms/index.html</a> for additional information.</p> <p>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a></p>	<p>Submission of the required information and forms is due with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>. If the information is not available at the time of application, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p>SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> in the Mandatory section.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the funding opportunity.</p> <p>To obtain a UEI and SAM registration, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>	<p>A UEI and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p>
<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a>.</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p>Certification Regarding Lobbying</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>

<b>What to Submit</b>	<b>Where Found</b>	<b>When to Submit</b>
(Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> .	
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i>  These forms are available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> in the Mandatory section. They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i>  This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i>  This form is available in the NOFO's forms package at <a href="http://www.Grants.gov">www.Grants.gov</a> .	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.  If not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Letter of Intent	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description.</i>	Submission is due by the Letter of Intent due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4.</i>
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
Project Summary	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in

<b>What to Submit</b>	<b>Where Found</b>	<b>When to Submit</b>
	The Project Summary is limited to one single-spaced page.	the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the application due date and time listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4.</i> of the NOFO.  If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances and Certifications</i> .	If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> .	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C.  Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Biographical Sketches or CVs for Key Staff	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

<b>What to Submit</b>	<b>Where Found</b>	<b>When to Submit</b>
Organizational Charts	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
Third-party agreements (e.g., MOUs, letters of commitment, and Consortia Agreements)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2 The Project Description.</i>	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4.</i> If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.