Office of Global Health
Office of the Administrator

Leveraging Health Service Equity Approaches for Sustainable HIV Epidemic Control – HRSA-22-160

Pre-Application Conference Call

June 14, 2022

Vision: To Improve the Health of Americans through Global Action

Office of Global Health (OGH)

Vision

- Healthy Communities, Healthy People Worldwide

Mission

- To improve the health of Americans through global action by providing leadership to develop linkages, foster interconnectedness, and facilitate a mutual exchange of expertise that strengthens systems of health, access, workforce, equity, and quality.

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Purpose of the Pre-application Conference Call

- The purpose of this call is to provide a general overview of the application and to provide an opportunity for applicants to ask questions to ensure clarity on the application requirements.

- ***Leveraging Health Service Equity Approaches for Sustainable HIV Epidemic Control Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*** *and* ***HRSA's SF-424 Application Guide*** should be your primary resources for application instructions and guidelines. This webinar will merely provide a brief overview of the NOFO and answer any questions you might have at this stage in the process.

- HRSA's *SF-424 Application Guide is* available at: http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424guide.pdf

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Outline

- Program Purpose
- Award Information
- Eligibility
- Program Description
- Application Submission
- Project Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Application Review Criteria & Considerations
- Resources
- Questions and Answers

Purpose of Funding Opportunity

- **The purpose** of this cooperative agreement, funded under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), is to develop and expand unique platforms to bring best practices from domestic experiences to assist the global HIV/AIDS program to sustain the goal of reaching epidemic control in Malawi, Zambia and other PEPFAR countries as identified.

Refer to pages 1-3 of the NOFO (Purpose and Background Sections)

Award Information

- **Application Due Date:** August 05, 2022

- **Award Type &**
- **Anticipated Number of Awards:** Cooperative Agreement 1

- **Estimated Maximum Funding:** $10,000,000 Annual

- **Period of Performance:** September 30, 2022 – September 29, 2027 (5 yrs)

- Support both Malawi and Zambia, and other PEPFAR Countries
- Applications are accepted up to the ceiling amount of $10M/yr

Refer to pages 1-3 of the NOFO (Purpose and Background Sections)

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Eligibility Information

- Eligible applicants include domestic or foreign public or non-profit private entities, including institutions of higher education, for-profit and not-for-profit entities, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, Indian Tribes and tribal organizations, and consortia consisting of such eligible organizations.

- Cost Sharing/matching is not required for this program

- Applicants that form a consortium with a demonstrated history of collaboration to support activities for HIV prevention, care and treatment in underserved areas both in the U.S. and globally are recommended.

Refer to pages 6-7 of the NOFO (Eligibility Information)

Eligibility Information

Considerations for a recommended consortium:

- At least three or more separately owned entities, including the applicant organization. The entities should all have different EINs and have established working relationships.

- Consortium members function in PEPFAR countries as one unified entity under one name when interacting with the host government, USG PEPFAR team, and stakeholders.

- Applicants should provide documentation (e.g., a letter of commitment) describing the responsibilities of consortium members for the proposed work plan, signed by all consortium members.

- The applicant must meet the eligibility requirements and assumes all legal, programmatic, and financial responsibilities under the award. Consortium participants would be considered sub-recipients of award funding, irrespective of whether the agreement between them is labeled as a contract, memorandum of understanding, or something else, and are subject to all terms and conditions of the award.

Refer to pages 6-7 of the NOFO (Eligibility Information)

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Eligibility Information

- HRSA may not consider an application for funding if it contains any of the non-responsive criteria below:
  - ✓ exceeds the ceiling amount
  - ✓ exceeds the application page limitations referenced in Section IV.2
  - ✓ fails to satisfy the deadline requirements as referenced in Section IV.4

- NOTE: Multiple applications from an organization are not allowable.

- HRSA will only accept your **last** validated electronic submission, under the correct funding opportunity number, prior to the Grants.gov application due date as the final and only acceptable application.

Refer to pages 6-7 of the NOFO (Eligibility Information)

Program Description

This **Cooperative Agreement** is a collaborative effort aimed at:

- Continuing and scaling current HRSA activities for impact in HIV/AIDS treatment services in Malawi, Zambia and other PEPFAR-supported countries

- Addressing social determinants and health inequalities found within the healthcare system to improve the delivery of quality HIV/AIDS services

- Formulating and delivering assistance for high-impact solutions across the range of interventions that are necessary to attain durable HIV epidemic control

Refer to pages 3 of the NOFO

Program Description

This funding focus is to address and continue the following program areas:

- Promote empowerment and linkage to health services among all adolescent girls and young women residing in targeted areas;

- Increase the capacity of health facilities to improve linkage to and continuity of HIV care;

- Partner with high-volume treatment sites to provide differentiated service delivery models that address treatment interruption and improve viral suppression rates;

- Use quality improvement and family-centered strategies to support the care needs of mothers and their HIV-exposed infants throughout pregnancy and the postpartum breastfeeding period up to 24 months;

- Ensure optimized client care records and reporting and related data use to improve the HIV continuum of care at all stages.

Program Description

This **program's priorities** should aim to:

(1) Advance equity of access to high-quality person-centered care.

(2) Introduce innovations that target HIV care and treatment services in sub-populations that lag behind in reaching and sustaining epidemic control.

(3) Integrate HIV prevention, care, and treatment services into country led programs in PEPFAR-supported countries to ensure continued gains towards reaching and sustaining HIV epidemic control.

Program Description

The Key Program Objectives are:

- Provide strategies for advancing health equity in host countries toward continued sustainability of HIV programs, as they approach the achievement of PEPFAR goals;

- Introduce innovations to reach sub-populations with unmet needs, and provide result-driven innovative implementation models for sustainable HIV epidemic control;

- Determine and disseminate best practices and innovative models that are person-centered and address social determinants of health to deliver high-quality health services;

- Strengthen health system capacities to enable seamless transition of HIV services to host country governments across PEPFAR-supported countries; and

- Monitor and evaluate the process of transition efforts to assure maintenance of positive health outcomes and performance results.

Submission Information

Applicants must use the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance which includes the following:

I.   Project Abstract

II.   Project Narrative

III.   SF-424A Budget

IV.   Budget Narrative

V.   Attachments

Project Abstract

The project Abstract should reflect:

The project title is "Leveraging Health Service Equity for Sustainable HIV Epidemic Control" and includes the following:

- A summary of the proposed activities;
- A description of the impact of the proposed activities; and
- Indicate the funding amount requested for the period of performance.

The project Abstract should not exceed one page

Refer to Section 4.1.ix of HRSA's *SF-424 Application Guide.*

Project Narrative

Sections:

- Introduction
- Needs Assessment
- Methodology
- Work Plan (include logic model)
- Resolution of Challenges
- Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity
- Organizational Information
- Budget and Budget Narrative

Refer to pages 12-21 of the NOFO

Project Narrative: Introduction

This section should

- Briefly describe the project purpose, design, and rationale

- Discuss how the program will engage and collaborate with stakeholders for effective, practical, and innovative solution that take into account evolving public health considerations

- Describe the consortium's responsibilities for carrying out the project activities.

Corresponds to Section V's Review Criteria # 1

Project Narrative: Needs Assessment

This section should

- Clearly summarized the gaps and challenges in achieving and sustaining HIV epidemic control and UNAIDS 95-95-95 goals in PEPFAR countries with a specific focus on Zambia, Malawi, and one other PEPFAR country.

- Outline the needs of specific populations and geographical areas.

- Describe the complexity of providing HIV care to patients with coexisting conditions.

- Discuss health system challenges that affect health service delivery and the availability, effectiveness, and capacity of the health workforce.

- Discuss the need to develop sustainable differentiated models of care.

- Provide a concise summary of the literature related to transitions of HIV and other health programs implemented by foreign entities to host country governments and best practices.

- Detail current health system and health management issues and components requiring additional support Please minimize background information and emphasize systems, processes, capabilities, and results.

Corresponds to Section V's Review Criteria #1

Project Narrative: Methodology

This section should

- Describe in detail the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-measured) objectives, goals and intended outcomes of the proposed project in Zambia, Malawi, and one other PEPFAR country.

- Describe the key activities proposed for accomplishing project goals and objectives related to the three priorities described in the Program Requirements and Expectations section.

- Discuss how you will build and maintain effective strategic partnerships with relevant government agencies, education institutions, regulatory bodies, health management teams, civil society organizations, multilateral organizations, other USG-funded programs, and other stakeholders to collectively develop practical, unique, and innovative solutions.

- Describe in detail your experience addressing improvements to person-centered care and services for people living with HIV.

Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 and #4

Project Narrative: Work Plan

This section should

- Describe the interventions you will use to achieve each of the objectives proposed in the Methodology section.

- Discuss how goals and objectives directly relate to the requirements and expectations of this initiative.

- Include goals, objectives, and outcomes that are SMART to include all aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The work plan should relate to the needs identified in the needs assessment and to the activities described in the project narrative

- The work plan should include sufficient detail to support understanding while recognizing that you will revise the work plan after the cooperative agreement is awarded and after initial consultations with HRSA and in-country stakeholders. Include the project's work plan as **Attachment 1**.

Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 and #4

Project Narrative: Work Plan

Logic Models

- Submit a logic model for designing and managing the project.
- For this notice, the logic model should summarize the connections between the:
  - **Project Goals;**
  - **Assumptions Inputs**
  - **Target population**
  - **Activities**
  - **Outputs**; and
  - **Outcomes**
- A logic model is not a work plan. Additional information on developing logic models at the following website: https://www.cdc.gov/evaluation/logicmodels/index.htm

Project Narrative: Resolution of Challenges

This section should

- Discuss the challenges that you are likely to encounter in designing and implementing the activities.

- Provide realistic and appropriate approaches that will be used to resolve such challenges.

- Identify and describe potential barriers to program implementation and possible challenges in working in low-resource settings, across multiple countries, and with local governments.

- Provide reasonable and actionable solutions to address these barriers.

Corresponds to Section V's Review *Criterion #2*

Project Narrative: Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity

This section should describe the following:

- Your capacity to monitor program goals and objectives, and your plans to track and quantify results through the utilization of tools, systems, and strategies developed through custom indicators and standard PEPFAR indicators (MER, SIMS, ER, HRH, etc.).

- The methods and measures that will be used to evaluate the impacts of the overall project, and how the performance management plan will link with expenditure reporting for the proposed project.

- The methods for effectively track performance outcomes and for data collection and management for accurate and timely program outcomes reporting.

- The strategies for developing and implementing a comprehensive evaluation plan to annually measure the impact of technical assistance and capacity development activities on health care workers' knowledge, skills, behaviors, improved access.

- How your organization will establish baseline data and measure program process and outcome data in alignment with the host country and PEPFAR goals,

- The current experience, skills, and knowledge, and the strategy to collect, analyze, and track data to measure process and impact/outcomes, and data use to inform program development and service delivery.

Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion # 3, #4 and #5

Project Narrative: Organizational Information

Describe your organization's current mission, structure, and scope of current activities, and how these elements all contribute to the organization's ability to implement the program requirements and meet program expectations.

Include the following elements:

- **Project Structure Description and Organizational Chart**
- **Management and Staffing Expertise and biographical sketches**
- **Global Health Federal Grants and/or Cooperative Agreements**
- **Past Performance References**
- **Provide information on your organization's resources and capabilities to provide culturally and linguistically competent training and capacity development services.**
- **Clearly describe how you will manage the cooperative agreement, including approaches to addressing potential problems.**

Refer to the instructions on pages 17-20 of the NOFO to complete this section

Project Narrative: Budget and Budget Narrative

Follow the instructions in Section 4.1.iv of HRSA's *SF-424 Application Guide.* A budget that follows the Application Guide will ensure that, if HRSA selects the application for funding, you will have a well-organized plan and, by carefully following the approved plan, may avoid audit issues during the implementation phase.

Reminder: The Total Project or Program Costs are the total allowable costs (inclusive of direct **and** indirect costs) you incur to carry out a HRSA-supported project or activity. Total project or program costs include costs charged to the award and costs borne by you to satisfy a matching or cost-sharing requirement, as applicable.

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Budget Requirements

- Budget Information consists of:
  - SF424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (Included in the application package) - Refer to the SF424 Application guide for detailed instructions on how to complete this form
  - Year 5 budget (Attachment 7) - Refer to the NOFO for detailed instructions
  - Budget Justification Narrative – Refer to the SF424 Application guide for instructions
  - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement if applicable (Attachment 8)

Budget Justification Narrative

- Provide a budget narrative that explains amounts requested for each line of the budget in Sections A-F.

- Describe each cost element and explain how each cost contributes to meeting the project's objectives/goals. Be very careful about showing how each item in the "other" category is justified.

- For subsequent budget years, highlight any changes from year one or clearly indicate that there are no substantive budget changes during the project period.

- MUST be concise. Do NOT use the justification to expand the project narrative.

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Budget Requirements

- Budget information consists of:

  - The budget must highlight activities directly linked to HIV and be aligned with the PEPFAR COP guidance.

  - Provide the 5th year budget under Attachment 7.

  - Indirect costs on grants awarded to foreign organizations and performed outside of the territorial limits of the United States may be paid to support the costs of compliance with federal requirements at a fixed rate of eight (8) percent of modified total direct costs exclusive of tuition and related fees, direct expenditures for equipment, and sub-awards and contracts under the grant in excess of $25,000.

Budget Requirements

- Allocation of multiple indirect cost rates: For institutions of higher education and nonprofits that have indirect costs benefitting major programs disproportionately, indirect rates will vary.

- Budget justification narrative

Refer to SF424 Application Guide

Application Requirements - Attachments

- **What it is**: Includes required and optional document attachments that complete the content of the application

- **Tips for Applicants:**
  - Carefully follow the instructions detailed in the NOFO for each attachment

  - Clearly label each attachment completed

  - Be aware of what counts toward the application's **page limit**

#1 Work Plan (Required)
#2 Staffing Plan and Job Descriptions for Key Personnel **(Required)**
#3 Biographical Sketches of Key Personnel **(Required)**
#4 Letters of Agreement, Letters of Support, MOUs, and/or Descriptions(s) of Proposed/Existing Contracts **(Required)**
#5 Project Organizational Chart **(Required)**
#6 Line-Item Budget – SF 424A **(Required)**
#7 Fifth Year Budget **(Required – NOT counted in page limit)**
#8 Indirect Cost Rate Agreement **(If applicable – NOT counted in page limit)**
#9 Global Health Federal Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and/or Contracts **(if applicable)**
#10 Past Performance References **(Optional)**
#11 HBCU Initiative Priority Factor **(Optional)**
#12-15 Other relevant documents **(Optional)**

Refer to pages 21-23 of the NOFO for attachments guidelines

Submission Dates and Times

- The due date for applications under this NOFO is August 5, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

- HRSA suggests submitting applications to Grants.gov at least **3 calendar days before the deadline**.

- See Section 8.2.5 – Summary of emails from Grants.gov of HRSA's *SF-424 Application Guide* for additional information.

Refer to pages i and 24 of the NOFO

Application Review Information

Procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications assist the objective review process in understanding the standards against which your application will be judged.

Critical indicators have been developed for each review criterion to assist you in presenting pertinent information related to that criterion and to provide the reviewer with a standard for evaluation.

- Review criteria are outlined in the NOFO with specific detail and scoring points.
- These criteria are the basis upon which the reviewers will evaluate and score the merit of the application. The entire proposal will be considered during an objective review.
- All six criteria will be used to review applications.

Refer to pages 28-34 of the NOFO for specific detail of the critical indicators

Application Review: Criteria

Criteria	Points
Criterion 1: *Need*	*10*
Criterion 2: *Response*	*35*
Criterion 3: **Evaluative Measures**	*15*
Criterion 4: *Impact*	*10*
Criterion 5: *Resources/Capabilities*	*25*
Criterion 6: *Support Requested*	*5*
TOTAL POINTS	*100*

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Application Review: Review Criterial Crosswalk

Narrative Section	Review Criteria
Introduction	(1) Need
Needs Assessment	(1) Need
Methodology	(2) Response
Work Plan	(2) Response and (4) Impact
Resolution of Challenges	(2) Response
Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity	(3) Evaluative Measures and (5) Resources/Capabilities
Organizational Information	(5) Resources/Capabilities
Budget and Budget Narrative	(6) Support Requested

Review Criterion #1: Need (10 points)

- The extent to which the application demonstrates the problem and associated contributing factors to the problem.
  - Demonstrates a comprehensive, up-to-date understanding of the progress/issues/challenges/needs
    - ✓ Importance of and a plan for stakeholder engagement and coordination
    - ✓ Plan for a consortium (if applicable) and contributions of each partner
    - ✓ Country progress toward achieving HIV epidemic control with specific information on Malawi, Zambia and one other PEPFAR-supported country
    - ✓ Gaps to achievement of HIV epidemic control and needs of sub-populations and geographical areas;
    - ✓ Pivoting and transitions of HIV services to address gaps and new PEPFAR priorities
    - ✓ Challenges and needs faced by host country governments and their health systems to ensure continued momentum toward HIV and TB epidemic control
    - ✓ Issues contributing to the sustainability of HIV epidemic control and quality health services and health workforce
    - ✓ Current progress toward and best practices related to effective and efficient health service delivery and health workforce models

Refer to pages 28-29 of the NOFO for details

Review Criterion #2: Response (35 points)

- *The extent to* which the proposed project responds to the "Purpose" included in the program description. The strength of the proposed goals and objectives and their relationship to the identified project. The extent to which the activities (scientific or other) described in the application are capable of addressing the problem and attaining the project objectives.

- Include the following:
    - **Methodology (20 points)**
    - **Work Plan (10 points)**
    - **Resolution of Challenges (5 points)**

- Other considerations

    Refer to pages 29-30 of the NOFO for details

Review Criterion #3: Evaluative Measures (15 points)

- The extent to which the applicant describes the method(s) proposed to monitor and evaluate the project results, and the evaluative measures will be able to assess:

    1) to what extent the program objectives have been met, and

    2) to what extent these can be attributed to the project.

- Other considerations

Refer to pages 30-31 of the NOFO for details

Review Criterion #4: Impact (10 points)

- The public health impact and effectiveness proposed from the project such as plans for dissemination, results on the community, extent for scale-up, and sustainability.

  - The strength and feasibility of proposed activities to smoothly transition HIV and related services into existing or adapted health services;

  - The extent to which the proposed activities align with efforts to ensure sustainability and continued momentum of HIV programs toward meeting PEPFAR goals and decreased HIV mortality, within the context of local health systems; and

  - The strength of the proposed methods to disseminate program findings, lessons learned, and promising practices to relevant stakeholders, local communities, national and international conferences, and peer-reviewed publications.

Refer to pages 31-32 of the NOFO for details

Review Criterion #5: Resources/Capabilities (25 points)

- The extent to which project personnel are qualified by training and/or experience to implement and carry out the project. The capabilities of the applicant organization and the quality and availability of facilities and personnel to fulfill the needs and requirements of the proposed project.

- The critical evaluation factors include:
    1) Organizational Description and Chart (5 points)
    2) Management and Staffing Plan (5 points)
    3) Administrative and Fiscal Oversight (5 points)
    4) Key Collaborations (10 points)

- Other considerations

Refer to pages 32-33 of the NOFO for details

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Review Criteria #6: Support Requested (5 points)

- Reviewers will consider:

  (1) How well the costs in the proposed budget and budget narrative align with the proposed project work plan, and are justified as adequate, cost-effective, and reasonable for the resources requested; and

  (2) The reasonableness of the proposed budget for each year of the period of performance, in relation to the objectives and the anticipated results.

- Other considerations

Refer to pages 33-34 of the NOFO for details

Review and Selection Process

Funding Priority: HBCU Initiative (10 points maximum)

- Have provided services under the PEPFAR HBCU Initiative to improve HIV care and treatment outcomes
- See more in the FY23 Planning Level Letters for Zambia and Malawi here: https://www.state.gov/where-we-work-pepfar/.

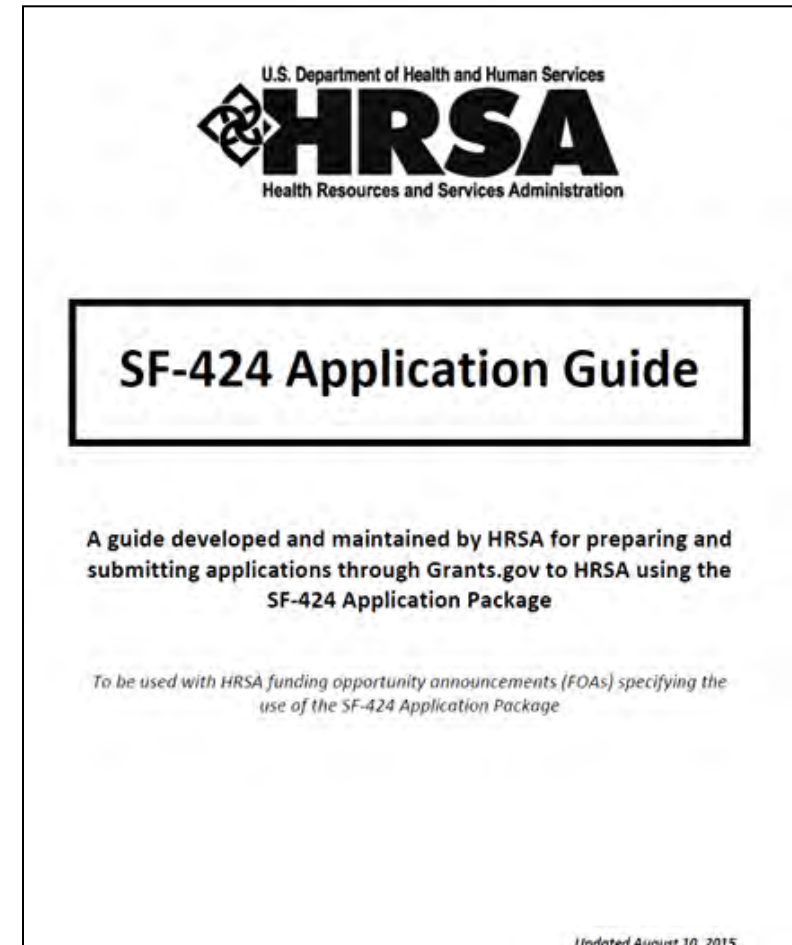**Two (2) points allowed for each priority factor included in Attachment 11.**

Refer to pages 34-35 of the NOFO for guidance

How to Apply

Application Guide

- **Companion Guide to the NOFO**
- **Referenced throughout the NOFO**
- https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf-424-app-guide.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

HRSA

Health Resources and Services Administration

SF-424 Application Guide

A guide developed and maintained by HRSA for preparing and submitting applications through Grants.gov to HRSA using the SF-424 Application Package

To be used with HRSA funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) specifying the use of the SF-424 Application Package

Updated August 10, 2015

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How to Apply – Must Register with SAM

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), System for Award Management (SAM), and Grants.gov

- **Register with** System for Award Management (SAM) **to receive the UEI**

  Use the following link (https://sam.gov/content/home | SAM.gov Knowledge Base)

- You will no longer use UEI (DUNS) and that number will not be maintained in any Integrated Award Environment (IAE) systems (SAM.gov, CPARS, FAPIIS, eSRS, FSRS, FPDS-NG). For more details, visit the following web pages: Planned UEI Updates in Grant Application Forms and General Service Administration's UEI Update.

- Register with Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov/)

Refer to pages Section 3.1 of HRSA SF-424 Application Guide

How to Apply – Tips for Completing your Application

- **Application Planning – What to Keep in Mind**
  - Check registrations in SAM and grants.gov!
  - Read the entire funding opportunity and HRSA SF-424 application guide
  - Check eligibility!
  - Does your organization have the technical expertise, the personnel, and the financial capacity?
  - Are all stakeholders supportive?
  - Is your organization prepared to do what it takes?
- **Paint a Comprehensive Picture**
- **Review Criteria**
  - All eligible applicants will be reviewed by an Objective Review Committee (ORC) to assess the technical merit of an application
- **Submit Your Application Early!**

Thank You!

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www.HRSA.gov

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