

Support for Early Childhood State Systems Through the Act Early Network to Support Recovery and Strengthen Resilience Skills, Behaviors, and Resources of Children, Families, and Communities

CDC-AUCD Leadership Opportunity Act Early Ambassadors: State or Territorial Liaisons to CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Program

Informational Session FAQ

The following questions were asked by individuals who have expressed interest in the current [AUCD-NCBDDD/CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Funding Opportunities](#). Each question was answered by program contacts from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) either during the informational session hosted by AUCD on July 14, 2020 or via email since. This document will be updated with additional questions as we receive them leading up to the August 11, 2020, 5pmET deadline.

- 1. Question:** Is there a font and spacing (double versus single) preference?
Answer: There is no font type requirement. The font size requirement is 12. Single spacing is fine.
- 2. Question:** We are expected to submit a written budget proposal for this current application. Do you expect that we will be able to modify or have a percentage of line-item flexibility or similar?
Answer: For AUCD-CDC subawards, AUCD's PI ([Adriane Griffen](#)) needs to monitor and review any subaward budget change requests in accordance with the [terms and conditions](#) of AUCD's overall CDC cooperative agreement. Significant redirection of funds (i.e., cumulative changes of 25% of total award) would need to be approved by AUCD and must still be in accordance with the proposed and approved work plan for the team. We will allow for line item flexibility (modifications) of 10% or less.
- 3. Question:** Is it permitted to collaborate with state groups that have already conducted COVID-related needs assessment and surveys in recent months? Could we use that data as a starting point?
Answer: Both are acceptable.
- 4. Question:** For the team, it said, "teams must also include certain state/territory stakeholders" and listed several. I interpreted that to mean that we should be trying to get stakeholders from each to be part of the team, as opposed to working with one. Can you clarify?

Answer: Correct, we request that you include at least one stakeholder from each of the entities listed.

5. **Question:** When you say state/territory, how are you defining territory? Is that for U.S. territories like Puerto Rico, or would it also apply to regions like New York city?

Answer: This funding opportunity is available to [all U.S. states/territories](#).

6. **Question:** How can I connect with the Title V program in my state/territory? How do I know if my state/territory has selected National Performance Measure (NPM) 6 (the percent of children, ages 10-71 months, receiving a developmental screening using a parent-completed screening tool) as one of their eight NPM's to work toward?

Answer: If you do not have a current connection with your Title V program, the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) can help get you connected with the right people. Please reach out to [Paige Bussanich](#) or [Anna Corona](#) for support. To learn more about the states/territories that have selected NPM 6, [visit this webpage](#) and in the dropdown in the top right, select "NPM 6: Developmental Screening".

7. **Question:** Can you tell us what the 4 steps of developmental surveillance are so we make sure to address the correct ones?

Answer: The steps we are referring to are listed on page two of the RFA under the "Grant Objectives" header, paragraph four: (1) parent-engaged developmental monitoring, (2) developmental and autism screening, (3) referral, and (4) receipt of early intervention services for children birth to 5, across early childhood systems.

8. **Question:** Within the 12 month period, is it mainly expected to implement the plan for the first step (parent-engaged...)?

Answer: Grantees are expected to fulfill all grant objectives laid out in the RFA within the project period.

9. **Question:** On states where there are two ambassadors can we apply together?

Answer: We encourage collaborative submissions in states/territories with multiple Act Early Ambassadors.

10. **Question:** Do you anticipate providing grantees data collection elements for evaluation?

Answer: We anticipate providing grantees with a variety of tools and resources to aid in data collection to include ongoing opportunities for technical assistance through our professional evaluator.

11. **Question:** Is the intent to improve resiliency among families with young children, or to improve resiliency and recovery of state systems serving children?

Answer: We see these two aims as interrelated and inextricable. Applicants have a considerable

amount of latitude to determine where best to focus efforts in their state/territory.

12. Question: Will we be using a common evaluation tool provided by CDC or need to develop our own? I believe you said we would get TA from a contractor so we should include this in our proposal.

Answer: A professional evaluator will work with all grantees in collaboration with the teams at AUCD and CDC to develop a common set of metrics to be reflected in elements of the end of project report required of all funded states/territories. This individual will also share evaluation tools and resources with grantees in addition to providing targeted TA to states/territories as requested.

13. Question: What information do you require of our fiscal agent? They need to know how they will receive the payments, is it one payment for the project year? More than one payment? What documentation do we need to send?

Answer: These will be cost-reimbursable contracts. Payments and invoicing will be monthly, preferably paid by ACH (we will provide each fiscal agent with an ACH form to complete upon award). A copy of the most current audit will be requested upon award of your fiscal agent. You are responsible for all project deliverables as the team lead/co-leads. Your fiscal agent is responsible for the monthly invoicing in collaboration with your team. A letter of support and willingness to serve as the fiscal agent for your state/territory would be most welcome but no further documentation is required as a part of the application process.

14. Question: Is there an expectation that all grantees use a common tool for needs assessments or that there will be common data points? The RFA states that AUCD will provide a standardized template for the needs assessment. When will that be provided and should that be used after the awards are announced?

Answer: AUCD will provide a standardized template for the needs assessment upon award. The needs assessment is not expected to be initiated or conducted prior to award.

15. Question: Under team composition (b) it says to list the team members and provide a brief written statement of commitment from each. Is this in addition to the required letter of support?

Answer: The two letters of support required are (1) from the host organization of the team lead and (2) from all members of the state team-this second required letter could be a single sign-on letter for all member of the state team or it could be a document with brief statements of support from each team member. In the team composition section, we only expect to see a listing of team members.

16. Question: We already have an existing state team that will be responsible for implementing the required components of this grant. Currently we do not have a representatives from the AUCD member organization or state AAP chapter. Can part of our project plan include how we will engage these organizations, or do we need to have their commitment at the time we apply?

Answer: We request that you include these stakeholders in the development of your team-gaining

a statement of commitment from each stakeholder at minimum is a requirement of the application.

17. Question: Is there a budget and budget narrative template we should use if not what format would you like these in?

Answer: No. Please refer to page five of the RFA for general guidance related to elements of the budget and budget narrative expected of all applicants.

18. Question: If I am in a state/territory where there are two Act Early Ambassadors, do we double the budget we submit?

Answer: We will fund one team per state/territory. The funding amount is level across states/territories regardless of population.

19. Question: It says "minimum \$75,000" but then says, "Should additional funding (greater than \$75,000) become available, a new budget may be requested." Does that mean that we are requesting a maximum of \$75,000 at this time, but might be eligible to get more if that becomes available?

Answer: Correct. We have funding available to support 56 states/territories at \$75,000 each. Should we a smaller number of states/territories successfully compete, more funds may become available for those states/territories that do successfully compete for funding.

20. Question: Can the funding be used for salary support?

Answer: A portion of your budget may be allocated to cover salary support that is performed in fulfillment of your project plan.

21. Question: When does the current Act Early Ambassador cohort end?

Answer: March 31, 2021.

22. Question: Is the fiscal agent for the Act Early State/Territorial Team opportunity required to be the employer of the team lead?

Answer: No.

23. Question: What entities are eligible to apply for the Systems grant? Does it have to be the AUCD member center, or can it be the organization that the Ambassador is employed by?

Answer: We request that the team lead or co-lead be an Act Early Ambassador, regardless of their employer. Employment at an AUCD network-affiliated center is not a requirement for eligibility to apply.

24. Question: When does the money need to be spent?

Answer: The project year for the award will be September 1, 2020-September 1, 2021. All funds

need to be spent down by the end of the project year.

25. Question: Will there be required grantee calls or meetings? If so, how often and how long?

Answer: Regular technical assistance calls will be scheduled and facilitated by AUCD and CDC throughout the project year. Successful applicants will be provided with orientation materials to include an expected schedule for these calls.

26. Question: Are there character or word limits within the AUCD system for some of the application boxes?

Answer: The only character/word limits been placed on elements of the application are (a) that the project plan must not exceed ten pages and (b) any statements of support and commitment must be 300 words or less.

27. Question: Is there a set indirect rate?

Answer: The indirect cap is listed on page five of the RFA, 25.74%.

28. Question: Regarding the needs assessment-can states leverage current needs assessments that are nearing completion in July/August to help inform this requirement? Our state would like to leverage our Title V needs assessment, our Preschool Development Grant needs assessment, 2 recent COVID recovery surveys to child care providers from our Child Development Division, and a parent engagement survey from our state Parents and Communities committee. We would supplement the information/data from these needs assessments with feedback from regional parent ambassadors.

Answer: We encourage states/territories to consult existing data points in their state when pulling together the needs assessment as a supplement to any original data collection efforts undertaken with the support of this funding.

29. Question: The RFA implies a needs assessment, plan for a project, and possibly the project implementation all be undertaken in the one year. Given COVID-19 orders that continue in some states (or that may be put back in place) that may create delays in IRB approval or getting the plan approved by the state team, is the plan implementation mandatory in the 12 month project period?

Answer: The project year for the award will be September 1, 2020-September 1, 2021. Please plan for the completion of all project deliverables by the end of the project year.

30. Question: Clarification in RFA. Is the expectation we include and execute a specific implementation activity AND a needs assessment?

Answer: Yes.

31. Question: Follow-up question (State/Territorial Team opp.) on "staff time" being included in the budget: is there a general or specific limit to the amount of State Ambassador FTE that can be included in the budget?

Answer: AUCD is not defining limitations around the acceptable use of staff time/FTE in the budget.

32. Question: On that same note of the 12 month grant, is there any intention to offer opportunities for additional funding beyond year 1 to award recipients? Similarly, is there potential for no-cost extension for implementing activities?

Answer: The project year for the award will be September 1, 2020-September 1, 2021. Please plan for the completion of all project deliverables by the end of the project year.

33. Question: What reporting will be required? And at what frequency?

Answer: Monthly invoicing will be required. An end of year project report will be required.

34. Question: Does the issue have to be something that particularly stems from the pandemic and then can be used outside of the pandemic context, or can it just generally address the 4 steps of development surveillance and access of services?

Answer: The issue does not have to stem directly from the COVID-19 pandemic but must address the four steps of developmental surveillance.

35. Question: Should we include additional work that can be funded if you have extra funds from not funding all states? Should we include how we'd use money if more than \$75K is available?

Answer: Please submit one budget for \$75,000. If more funding becomes available we will request a new budget at the new funding level upon award.

36. Question: If a state's Ambassador role expires before the end of the project period, does a new application need to be submitted now or at the time it expires? When do we re-apply?

Answer: This is an unlikely scenario to be handled on a case by case basis if it does occur. CDC expects the current cohort of Act Early Ambassadors will be supported through the end of this project.

Questions/More Information

If you have any questions regarding this opportunity, please contact Danielle Webber at dwebber@aucd.org.