

## *Notice of Federal Funds Availability*

### **OVERVIEW OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**Federal Agency Name:** Corporation for National and Community Service  
**Program Name:** Social Innovation Fund  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2012 Social Innovation Fund Cooperative Agreements  
**Announcement Type:** Notice of Federal Funds Availability  
**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):** 94:019

**Dates:** Applications are due March 27, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Successful applicants will be notified by mid-August, 2012.

This Notice of Funds Availability (*Notice*) announces the opportunity to apply for Fiscal Year 2012 awards from the Social Innovation Fund. The Social Innovation Fund is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.

In 2009, Congress passed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the most sweeping expansion of national service in a generation. This landmark law not only expands service opportunities, it focuses national service on key outcomes; builds the capacity of individuals, nonprofits, and communities to succeed; and encourages innovative approaches to solving problems, including through the establishment of the Social Innovation Fund.

The Social Innovation Fund is itself an innovative program that awards grants to and works with existing grantmaking institutions, referred to in this *Notice* as “intermediaries,” to direct resources to promising community-based nonprofit organizations to validate and grow outcomes-focused approaches to challenges facing local communities in three priority issue areas:

- Youth Development;
- Economic Opportunity; and
- Healthy Futures.

As one of the Obama Administration’s “tiered-evidence initiatives,” the Social Innovation Fund embodies a commitment to use rigorous evidence both to select recipients of federal funding and to validate the impact of their program models. The program also represents a key part of the Administration’s efforts to advance social innovation as a strategy to address critical social challenges and is driven by three core principles: (1) many of the most compelling solutions to persistent social problems in low-income communities are being developed in those communities and not in Washington, DC; (2) significant impact can be generated for society by proactively identifying the best community-based solutions, strengthening their evidence base, and supporting the growth of their impact; and (3) the federal government can help drive social innovation by stimulating, focusing and enhancing public-private partnerships and cross-sector collaborations to grow the impact of the best community solutions.

As it relates to the Social Innovation Fund, “social innovation” is understood to be the

development and eventual scaling of promising and potentially transformative community-based approaches that solve critical problems. An approach is “transformative” if it not only produces strong impact (as defined in this *Notice*), but also if it (1) has the potential to affect how the same challenge is addressed in other communities, (2) addresses more than one critical community challenge concurrently, or (3) produces significant cost savings through gains in efficiency.

Although the practice of social innovation involves the invention and testing of new ideas, the Social Innovation Fund is not intended to fulfill this role for two reasons: first, the nonprofit marketplace already offers sources of funding for that stage of development, and second the Social Innovation Fund believes that its funds are most appropriately and responsibly used for programs with a higher demonstrated probability of success. Consequently, the Social Innovation Fund focuses primarily on “promising” approaches. These approaches may be relatively new or have limited current market penetration, but they will have a body of operational experience and at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness, as defined in this *Notice*.

Over the past two years, the Social Innovation Fund has competitively selected 16 intermediaries to implement programs in low-income communities around the country. To learn more about our existing grantees and to read their full applications to CNCS, please visit:

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation\\_transparency.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation_transparency.asp).

In accordance with the Obama Administration’s emphasis on open government, CNCS has moved toward greater openness and transparency in grantmaking. This *Notice* includes a description of the application review and selection process in Section V. In addition, the following items pertaining to this competition for new applications will be published on the CNCS website at <http://nationalservice.gov/about/open/grants.asp> within a period not to exceed 90 business days after all grant awards have been issued:

- A blank external review template;
- A list of all compliant applications submitted;
- Executive summaries of all compliant applications;
- The official cover sheet and program narratives for successful applications;
- A list of all external reviewers; and
- Summaries of external reviewer comments on successful applications.

In addition, all grantees of the Social Innovation Fund will be required to release, at a minimum, the following information about their subgrant competitions:

- A description of their subgrantee selection process;
- A list of external reviewers for their subgrantee selection process;
- A list of awarded subgrantees;
- Summaries of external reviewer comments on successful subgrant applications; and
- The full applications of awarded subgrantees.

Publication of this *Notice* does not obligate CNCS to award any specific number of cooperative agreements or to obligate the entire amount of funding available.

## FULL TEXT OF NOTICE

### I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

#### A. What is the purpose of Social Innovation Fund funding?

The purpose of the Social Innovation Fund is to grow the impact of innovative community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities throughout the United States. It does this through a grant program that mobilizes public and private resources to address opportunities in priority areas of need: youth development, economic opportunity and healthy futures.

The Social Innovation Fund directs resources toward increasing the evidence base, capacity and scale of the organizations it funds in order to improve the lives of people served by those organizations. The Social Innovation Fund also generates broader impact by leveraging the grant program in various ways to improve how other federal government departments and agencies deploy funds to address social challenges and enhances the ability of the nonprofit sector to support the growth of innovative, high-impact organizations.

The operating model of the Social Innovation Fund has been explicitly designed to advance these objectives and is distinguished by four key elements: (1) reliance on intermediaries with strong skills and track records of success to do the critical work of selecting, validating, and growing high-impact nonprofit organizations; (2) requiring each federal dollar granted by the Social Innovation Fund be matched 1:1 by the intermediaries with money from private and other non-federal sources and that subgrants by these intermediaries be matched 1:1 by subgrantees; (3) requirements that all grantees engage each of their subgrantees in formal evaluations of program performance and impact; and (4) requiring each grantee to commit to knowledge sharing and other initiatives that advance social innovation more generally in the nonprofit sector.

#### B. Who should apply for a 2012 Social Innovation Fund grant?

The Social Innovation Fund is seeking existing grantmaking “intermediaries” who propose to address significant social challenges with well-designed, compelling programs built on innovative community solutions with evidence of effectiveness. These programs must focus on one or more of the following issue areas:

- **Youth Development** – Preparing America’s youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;
- **Economic Opportunity** – Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals; and/or
- **Healthy Futures** – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.

Further, these intermediaries must have strong track records of successfully engaging in the key processes that constitute the essential work of the Social Innovation Fund:

- Selecting “promising” nonprofits (“subgrantees”) with a high potential for generating strong impact;

- Supporting these organizations in increasing capacity, scale and impact;
- Substantively evaluating the results of the subgrantees.

In this context, “promising” refers to organizations that are at a specific stage in the development of their community solution. At a minimum, they must have at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness for the program model they will implement, as defined in this *Notice*, and sufficient organizational robustness to justify limited scaling and further validation of the program’s effectiveness. However, these organizations will likely not yet have reached a stage of development at which their program and operating models can be considered “proven,” and therefore may not be ready for large-scale growth and expansion.

Applying intermediaries may propose subgrant funding strategies that are of two distinct types. In both cases, the intermediary will have defined a specific social problem it intends to address through its own Social Innovation Fund. Under one strategy, the intermediary will be seeking and investing in subgrantee organizations that have themselves developed and/or implemented innovative solutions to the specified problem. Under the other strategy, the intermediary will have identified the innovative solution and will be seeking subgrantees that are able to effectively implement that solution.

In making its final award determinations under this *Notice*, CNCS will endeavor to include a diverse set of applicants, in terms of identified priority issues and geography, including those applicants that serve “significantly philanthropically underserved” geographic areas or geographic areas that are not being currently served by the Social Innovation Fund. To see a map of current Social Innovation Fund programs, see our website: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation\\_grantees.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation_grantees.asp).

### **C. What are the 2012 Social Innovation Fund funding priorities?**

In the 2012 Competition, CNCS expects to fund applicants that successfully meet the requirements described in this *Notice*. Within that context, CNCS seeks to target its 2012 grantmaking towards intermediaries who propose programs that are likely to generate significant, measurable improvements in the economic well-being of individuals and families served by subgrantees.

Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding and all funded applicants will first need to demonstrate that they have effectively met program requirements, especially those related to use of evidence and evaluation capacity.

Please note, given that innovation funds currently exist in the Departments of Education and Labor to invest specifically in evidence-based programs in education and job training, CNCS does not intend to make Social Innovation Fund awards to programs in these areas unless they clearly propose a solution to an unmet need as identified in consultation with both Departments. To learn more about the Department of Labor and Department of Education innovation funds, please visit their websites: Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund: [http://www.doleta.gov/workforce\\_innovation/](http://www.doleta.gov/workforce_innovation/).

Department of Education Investing in Innovation Fund:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>

**D. How does the Social Innovation Fund work?**

In FY 2012, CNCS will award a limited number of Social Innovation Fund grants to grantmaking institutions, referred to in this *Notice* as “intermediaries.” These intermediaries will match their award and then competitively select and invest in portfolios of nonprofit organizations (subgrantees) with at least preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of a particular program model working in low-income communities. At least 80 percent of awarded federal funds must be invested in subgrantee programs.

Subgrantees selected by the intermediaries also will match their awards and will work to achieve measurable outcomes in their issue and geographic area, evaluate their impact, and grow their reach to serve more individuals. Throughout this process, subgrantees will be supported and monitored by the intermediaries, which will remain accountable to CNCS for achieving the intended results set forth in their proposals.

**E. What is the match requirement for this competition?**

Social Innovation Fund intermediaries are required to match the entire amount of federal funds expended on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The match must be in cash, not met through in-kind resources. For FY 2012, Social Innovation Fund applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet 50 percent of their cash match requirement at the time of the application. Subgrantees also will be required to match the full amount of the grant they expend from the intermediary on a dollar-for-dollar basis, in cash.

**F. What is the requirement for serving “low-income communities” and how does CNCS define these communities?**

As specified in section 198K of the National Community Service Act (NCSA), Social Innovation Fund intermediary grantees must make subgrants and otherwise support programs that serve “low-income” communities. For purposes of this *Notice*, “low-income community” means either:

- A population of individuals or households being served by a subgrantee on the basis of having a household income that is 200 percent or less of the applicable federal poverty guideline, or
- Either a population of individuals or households, or a specific local geographic area, with specific measurable indicators that correlate to low-income status, such as, but not exclusive to, K-12 students qualifying for free- or reduced-lunch, long-term unemployment, risk of homelessness, low school achievement, persistent hunger, or serious mental illness. An application that proposes to rely on measurable indicators should fully describe the basis for relying upon those indicators (including citations to appropriate studies). The application also must describe and cite the source of data supporting the conclusion that the targeted community meets the indicators.

**G. How does the CNCS define which communities are “significantly philanthropically underserved?”**

For purposes of this *Notice*, CNCS considers applicants to be serving significantly philanthropically underserved communities if they support subgrantees that carry out activities in low-income communities that are also in a rural geographic area. A “rural geographic area,” for the purposes of the *Notice*, is one with a 2003 Rural-Urban Continuum Code of 4 or higher (as issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service). The full list of Rural-Urban Continuum Codes is listed here: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/rurality/ruralurbcon/>.

#### **H. What is the subgranting process and what are the requirements?**

By statute, intermediaries must select subgrantees on an open, competitive basis. This means that intermediaries must run an open competition that is available to eligible nonprofit organizations beyond their own existing grant portfolio or network. To do so, intermediaries should provide sufficient public notice of the availability of Social Innovation Fund subgrants to eligible nonprofit community organizations.

Intermediaries may propose their own unique processes for selecting subgrantees, but their selection process must ensure that the following information is available to all potential applicants:

- The desired characteristics and eligibility requirements of organizations the intermediary is seeking as subgrantees;
- How to obtain and submit an application;
- The selection criteria that will be considered in reviewing applications, including the relative percentages, weights, or other means used to distinguish among the criteria; and
- Requirements for program growth and evaluation of subgrantees that are selected.

Subgrants are to be made in annual amounts of \$100,000 or more, per year, for a period between three and five years. For the FY 2012 Social Innovation Fund competition, Social Innovation Fund intermediaries should award larger subgrants to programs that show higher levels of evidence, as defined below. Applicants should note that their subgrantees will be required to provide dollar-for-dollar matching funds, in cash, for each year that they receive a Social Innovation Fund subgrant.

Successful intermediary applicants will need to demonstrate plans for achieving the program goals and requirements through successful subgrant programs. Experience with previous Social Innovation Fund grantees has shown that this can be challenging for subgrantees at the lowest level of funding. Therefore, if an applicant is proposing subgrants at the minimum level, the applicant will need to explain how they plan to ensure program capacity for meeting requirements with fewer subgrant resources.

In order to maximize the impact of the Social Innovation Fund and ensure a diverse array of innovative grantees across the federal government, intermediary applicants should direct funds toward innovations that will not receive grants for the *same* activities from other federal innovation funds (e.g., “Investing in Innovation” at the Department of Education). Final Social Innovation Fund award decisions may take into consideration the outcomes of other federal competitions.

## **I. What are the requirements for growing the impact of program models through the Social Innovation Fund?**

As noted above, the purpose of the Social Innovation Fund is to grow the impact of innovative community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities throughout the United States. Further, the Social Innovation Fund is explicitly focused on “promising” organizations that have sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of their program model (detailed in Subsection J below) and organizational capacity to justify at least limited growth as the organization progresses toward the “proven” stage.

Subgrantees may grow the impact of their program model in several ways, including through expansion of existing program sites or replication of the program to new sites in different communities. However, all strategies should involve expanding the selected solutions so that more people in low-income communities derive substantial, measurable benefit.

All intermediaries who receive funding will be required to propose and implement detailed plans for growing their impact during the period of their grant. These plans will include at a minimum the following information:

- How growth is connected to the subgrantee’s plan to improve its level of evidence;
- The estimated number of additional people expected to be benefitted by the program each year due to growth;
- The strategies subgrantees will utilize to generate growth in the number of people impacted, e.g., through expansions in current locations, replication of the program model to additional locations or other methods that do not require physical expansion (e.g., expanded use of technology, adoption of wide-scale policy mandates, etc.);
- The services, including training and technical assistance, the intermediary will provide to subgrantees to facilitate the planned growth; and
- How the intermediary will track and assess actual growth of impact as measured compared to the estimates included in their plan.

While all subgrantees will be expected to demonstrate growth during their time in the Social Innovation Fund, CNCS expects that there will be a direct, positive relationship between the levels of growth that intermediaries propose for given subgrantees and the level of evidence the subgrantees possess at the time of their selection for funding. For example, a program that has strong evidence of impact would be expected to have a more ambitious growth plan than a program with preliminary evidence; we would not expect to see a plan for broad replication from a subgrantee with preliminary evidence. Likewise, it follows that programs with higher levels of evidence that have higher growth targets would receive larger funding awards. This should be reflected in applicants’ proposals.

## **J. What are the evidence and evaluation requirements in the Social Innovation Fund and how are different levels of evidence defined?**

**Selection Requirements.** CNCS will select Social Innovation Fund intermediaries that have a track record of using evidence to select and invest in their grantees. In this *Notice*, below, CNCS defines three tiers of evidence: preliminary, moderate, and strong. CNCS will select Social

Innovation Fund intermediaries that propose to both fund program models with *at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness* and also to support further evaluation of those models in order to improve the level of evidence and develop greater understanding of what makes the program successful.

**Evaluation Requirements.** The program models funded by Social Innovation Fund intermediaries must produce rigorous evaluative evidence that not only assesses effectiveness, but also builds the existing evidence base for other programs addressing these issues. Accordingly, it is the clear expectation of CNCS that each program model will achieve moderate or strong evidence of impact (as defined below) by the end of its three to five year subgrant period. (Please note, because of the rigor of such evaluation designs, program models with only early stages of preliminary evidence may not be appropriate candidates for subgrants through the Social Innovation Fund. Please refer to the definition of *promising* models earlier in this publication for more information.) As such, intermediaries and subgrantees are required to commit significant time and resources to ensure formal evaluations of each program model that receives Social Innovation Fund funding. As noted in section VI.H, successful development of the plans, including achieving CNCS approval, is a consideration for continued grant funding.

Once selected, Social Innovation Fund intermediaries should expect to participate in and manage several activities to ensure the successful evaluation of models within their portfolios. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Develop an overall evaluation strategy for their portfolios that reflects the key outcomes and levels of evidence their subgrantees are expected to achieve, as well as describe their contracted research partners, timetable, budget, and methodology for coordinating all stakeholders and required evaluation activities;
- Develop individual subgrantee evaluation plans for each funded intervention that documents the evaluations' technical design and demonstrates how each plan will measure and increase the program model's evidence base. These plans must be approved by CNCS before implementation;
- Provide any necessary capacity building and technical assistance to their subgrantees to ensure they are able to build not only their capacity to accomplish all Social Innovation Fund-related evaluation requirements, but also to continue to measure their program model's impact into the future;
- Implement individual subgrantee evaluation plans and report progress and results to CNCS; and,
- Collaborate with CNCS to review and strengthen their strategies and plans and ensure appropriate implementation and reporting of each plan.

**Use of Contracted Research Partners:** CNCS expects that most intermediaries will choose to contract with a research partner and/or require their subgrantees to contract with a research partner to help with some or all of the following activities: (1) determining the technical design of their evaluations plans, (2) implementing their CNCS-approved evaluation plans and report on the evidence collected, and (3) conducting technical assistance for subgrantees to build not only their capacity to accomplish all Social Innovation Fund-related evaluation requirements but also to continue to measure their program model's impact into the future. CNCS strongly suggests applicants consider hiring a research partner, particularly if they do not have the capacity or

skills within their own staff to meet evaluation requirements for the program.

**Funding for Evaluation Activities:** CNCS recognizes that rigorous evaluations are expensive and that nonprofits often are unfamiliar with these processes and costs because many funders do not make evaluations a priority. Given the central role that evaluation plays in the success of the Social Innovation Fund, please be advised that intermediaries and their subgrantees are expected to allocate appropriate resources to cover the many activities related to the evaluation of each program model's effectiveness. Your application should specifically indicate your estimated costs related to evaluation as described in the narrative instruction section below.

**CNCS Role:** CNCS is committed to supporting intermediaries in their efforts to increase the evidence of program effectiveness within their Social Innovation Fund portfolios. The agency will work closely with intermediaries to meet this goal by providing them with technical assistance on the design, implementation, and monitoring of their subgrantee evaluation plans. All subgrantee evaluation plans proposed by intermediaries will require the approval of CNCS before implementation. CNCS sees this process of ongoing evaluation and knowledge building as a key aspect of the Social Innovation Fund that can improve grantee and subgrantee programs and also benefit other organizations throughout the nonprofit sector.

**Definitions of Evidence:** CNCS will use the following definitions of preliminary, moderate, and strong evidence (these definitions are consistent with those used in the Investing in Innovation Fund at the US Department of Education):

- Preliminary evidence means evidence that is based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by research findings. Thus, research that has yielded promising results for either the program model or a similar program model will meet CNCS' criteria. Examples of research that meet the standards include: 1) outcome studies that track participants through a program and measure participants' responses at the end of the program; and 2) pre- and post-test research that determines whether participants have improved on an intended outcome.
- Moderate evidence means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity) but have limited generalizability (i.e., moderate external validity). This also can include studies for which the reverse is true—studies that only support moderate causal conclusions but have broad general applicability. The following would constitute moderate evidence: (1) At least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study supporting the effectiveness of the practice strategy, or program, with small sample sizes or other conditions of implementation or analysis that limit generalizability; (2) at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study that does not demonstrate equivalence between the intervention and comparison groups at program entry but that has no other major flaws related to internal validity; or (3) correlational research with strong statistical controls for selection bias and for discerning the influence of internal factors.

- Strong evidence means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and that, in total, include enough of the range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the state, regional, or national level (i.e., studies with high external validity). The following are examples of strong evidence: (1) More than one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study or well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program; or (2) one large, well-designed and well-implemented randomized controlled, multisite trial that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program.

**Of Note:** CNCS sees the relationship between evidence and program growth as an iterative process. While subgrantees must have at least preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of their proposed program model in order to receive funding, CNCS recognizes that all programs move through stages in developing a greater body of evidence. Depending on the circumstances and the existing data about an intervention, different types of evaluation design or data collection could be appropriate. As a result, in order for each program model to reach moderate or strong evidence of impact by the end of the three to five year subgrant period, CNCS expects that some models may require a series of successive evaluations to build their evidence base during their grant. The agency will work with intermediaries to determine appropriate short-and-long term evaluation plans to meet this goal.

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Funding Available**

For FY 2012, CNCS anticipates awarding approximately \$10 to \$15 million to up to six new Social Innovation Fund intermediary organizations. Based on recent experience and expressions of interest, CNCS anticipates that this Social Innovation Fund grant competition will be highly competitive.

### **B. What is the award amount?**

For the FY 2012 Social Innovation Fund award competition, CNCS expects to make annual awards in the range of \$1 million to \$5 million per year. CNCS expects to make larger grants to those intermediary organizations with a track record of supporting subgrantees with strong evidence of effectiveness (as described in section I.J in this *Notice*) and the capacity to support growth of program impact. As occurred in FY 2011, CNCS may make awards that provide multiple years of operational funding.

### **C. What is the award period?**

The Social Innovation Fund award period is up to five years. Applicants' project and evaluation plans should represent the full five year period. Selected grantees will receive an award for the first year of program expenses. During program years two through five, grantees will participate in an annual continuation funding review process during which time they will be eligible for additional annual funds. These additional funds are contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance with grant conditions, and satisfactory performance, including having

secured sufficient matching funds and making appropriate progress in advancing the evaluations and growth of subgrantees. Please see section VI.H for more information.

#### **D. Funding Instrument**

The funding mechanism for Social Innovation Fund awards is a cooperative agreement that provides for substantial involvement by CNCS with the grantee organizations (intermediaries) as they carry out approved activities. The assigned CNCS program officer will confer with the grantee on a regular and frequent basis to develop and/or review service delivery and project status, including work plans, budgets, periodic reports, evaluations, etc. In particular CNCS anticipates having substantial involvement in:

- Developing and approving subgrantee selection plans;
- Developing and approving subgrantee evaluation plans;
- Documenting subgrantee growth plans; and
- Documenting and sharing lessons learned through a CNCS-sponsored learning community.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. Eligible Organizations**

To be eligible for a Social Innovation Fund award, applicants must be either an existing grantmaking institution or an eligible partnership. A grantmaking institution is an organization in existence at the time of the application that invests in nonprofit community organizations or programs through grants as an essential rather than a collateral means of fulfilling its mission and vision. The emphasis on grantmaking activities as a part of an organization's mission should be evident in the applicants' mission statements and promotional materials, and should be clearly reflected as a significant percentage of their annual operating budget.

In keeping with this view, grantmaking institutions will generally have the following as part of their core operating functions:

- Conducting open or otherwise competitive programs to award grants to or make investments in a diverse portfolio of nonprofit community organizations;
- Negotiating specific grant requirements with nonprofit community organizations; and
- Overseeing and monitoring the performance of grantees.

An eligible partnership is a formal relationship between an existing grantmaking institution (as defined above) and either an additional grantmaking institution, a State Commission on National and Community Service, or a chief executive officer of a unit of general local government where the partner organizations will share responsibilities under the award. In a cooperative agreement with a partnership, CNCS would expect to be dealing with each partner organization with some degree of independence concerning their collective responsibilities. For example, a partnership could include one organization that handles all aspects of a Social Innovation Fund program related to evaluation, while another organization handles all aspects related to finances and grant administration.

Other collaborations, which may be similar to consultant or contractor arrangements, in which an

organization obtains access to needed competencies but remains fully responsible for performance of the cooperative agreement, will not be treated as partnerships for purposes of determining eligibility.

Existing Social Innovation Fund grantees may apply under this *Notice*, but their application must seek funding for a program that is distinct from the program currently being funded. An application to expand a program currently supported by the Social Innovation Fund into different geographical areas will not be considered an application for a distinct program.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving assistance described in this *Notice*. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

This competition is open to all entities that meet compliance and eligibility criteria. Receipt of previous funding from CNCS or other federal agencies is not a prerequisite to applying under this *Notice*.

## **B. Matching Requirement for Competition Eligibility**

Social Innovation Fund intermediary grantees will match the federal funds expended, dollar-for-dollar in cash. For FY 2012, Social Innovation Fund applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet 50 percent of their cash match requirement at the time of the application. Subgrantees will be required to provide the same match—dollar-for-dollar in cash—for every dollar they expend as well.

## **C. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**

Applications must include a DUNS number and all applicants must be registered with the CCR. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number.

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>.

CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grantees are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a

DUNS number in order to register with the CCR. It typically takes 3 to 5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to [www.bpn.gov/CCR](http://www.bpn.gov/CCR).

#### **D. Other Compliance and Eligibility Requirements**

In order to be compliant for review, an applicant must address items one and two below. In order to be eligible for an award, applicants must address items three through five.

##### **1. Meet specific compliance requirements including:**

- Submitting a budget that reflects a federal share of between \$1 million and \$5 million;
- Submitting a budget that reflects a plan to distribute at least 80 percent of awarded federal funds to subgrantees (note: for further information on this requirement, please see the Budget Instruction in section VII.C.2);
- Submitting an application in a timely manner as provided in this *Notice*; and
- Submitting an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and follows the instructions provided in this *Notice*.

##### **2. Demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent of the required first year matching funds, based on the amount of grant funds requested.**

At the time of submission, applicants must demonstrate through a letter or other form of documentation that they have either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent of their first year matching funds, based on the amount of federal grant funds applied for. For example, a request of \$1 million needs to be accompanied by documentation of \$500,000 in cash on-hand or commitments at the time of application. Instructions for how to provide documentation of matching funds are provided in section IV.G.

##### **3. Be an existing grantmaking institution or an eligible partnership, as defined in section III.A above.**

##### **4. Declare its status as either a geographically-based or issue-based Social Innovation Fund that will focus on improving measurable outcomes.**

CNCS asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in section 198K of the NCSA, there are two basic operational models of Social Innovation Fund intermediaries. The first is a Social Innovation Fund that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a “geographically-based Social Innovation Fund.” The second model is a Social Innovation Fund that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an “issue-based Social Innovation Fund.” CNCS will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based Social Innovation Fund.

##### **a. Geographically-Based Social Innovation Fund**

To apply as a geographically-based Social Innovation Fund, the applicant must propose to focus on serving low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and propose to focus on improving measurable outcomes related to one or more of the following priority issue areas:

- Youth Development;
- Economic Opportunity; and/or
- Healthy Futures.

**b. Issue-Based Social Innovation Fund**

To apply as an issue-based Social Innovation Fund, the applicant must propose to focus on addressing one of the following priority issue areas within multiple proposed target low-income communities in multiple geographic locations:

- Youth Development;
- Economic Opportunity; and/or
- Healthy Futures.

**5. Have an evidence-based decision making strategy.**

Applicants must include information in their application that describes the ways they use evidence and evaluation to:

- Select and invest in subgrantees;
- Measure the effectiveness of subgrantees;
- Support, monitor, and assess the success of subgrantees' growth;
- Achieve measurable outcomes.

Applicants also must have a well-articulated proposal to:

- Select and grow subgrantee programs that have been shown to have *at least* preliminary evidence of effectiveness; and
- Implement and/or oversee evaluations of all subgrantee program models to grow the evidence base for their funded interventions.

Plans may include collaborating with research organizations to carry out rigorous evaluation of subgrantees.

**E. Application of Eligibility Criteria**

CNCS will first conduct a compliance review of applications to determine whether they meet the compliance criteria listed above in sections D.1 and D.2. Executive summaries will then be screened to confirm whether the applicant meets eligibility criteria listed in sections D.3. and D.4. The compliance and initial eligibility reviews will not involve reading the entire application. However, portions of the application may be reviewed in order to clarify statements in the executive summary. Any application that does not meet each of these four initial criteria will be considered nonresponsive to this *Notice* and will not be further reviewed.

The remaining applications will be reviewed as described in this *Notice*. The review will include an evaluation of the final eligibility criteria above as part of the overall review process. In addition, and as necessary, CNCS will further evaluate an applicant during clarifying discussions

and possible site visits with applicants. CNCS also anticipates conducting due diligence reviews to assess or confirm information or assurances provided by applicants. As part of these application reviews, further discussions and any due diligence reviews, CNCS may conclude that an application does not meet one or more of the eligibility criteria listed above, in which case the application will be considered ineligible and will not be further considered.

#### **IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

##### **A. Address to Request Application Package**

The *Notice* may be found on CNCS's Web site at:  
[http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp).

You may also request a copy of the application by dialing the TTY number: 800-833-3722.

##### **B. Application Content**

Applications for the Social Innovation Fund will include the following components:

- A. Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Facesheet
  - 1. Applicant Information
  - 2. Application Information
- B. Narratives (OMB Control# 3045-0129)
  - 1. Executive Summary
  - 2. Program Design
  - 3. Organizational Capacity
  - 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- C. Standard Form 424A Budget
  - 1. Budget Worksheet
  - 2. Budget Requirements
  - 3. Matching Funds
- D. Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications
- E. Optional Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity (*Optional*; OMB Control# 1894-0010)

##### **C. Instructions for Submitting an Application in eGrants**

CNCS requires that all applicants submit their applications electronically via CNCS's web-based application system, [eGrants \(www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/\)](http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/). We recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

###### **1. How is an application created in eGrants?**

If you need help establishing a new organization account in eGrants, or a new user account for an existing organization account, contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677.

After you create your eGrants account, begin by selecting “New” under the *Creating an Application* heading on your Home Page. Select “Other” as the *Program Area* and click “Go.” You will then be asked to *select a NOFA*. Choose: **Social Innovation Fund 2012**. Once you create an application, you will be allowed to edit as needed until you are ready to submit.

**Do not** use the “New” button again as this will start a brand new application. Once you have initiated an application, it will be listed in the View My Grants/Applications section of the homepage under the status: *Grantee Edit of Application or Report*. If you exit and then return to eGrants and wish to continue entering or editing your application, please open your saved version by selecting “View My Grants/Applications” in the status *Grantee Edit of Application or Report*.

To view a Power Point presentation containing instructions for how to complete your application in eGrants, please see the resources posted to our website at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation.asp>.

## **2. What are the page limits?**

You may not exceed 55 double spaced pages when completing the Narrative section, including the Standard Form 424 Facesheet. In eGrants, the narrative section is comprised of the:

- Executive Summary;
- Program Design;
- Organizational Capacity; and
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

Reviewers will not consider material submitted over the page limit. Because eGrants will allow you to enter and submit text over the limit, it is important that you print your final application to confirm the total number of pages. From the Review and Submit page, print out your application prior to final submission to ensure it is not over the 55 page limit. This limit does not include the budget information included in Standard Form 424A.

**Do not submit supplementary material such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any items not requested in this Notice. CNCS will not review or return them.**

## **3. How do I request assistance with an application?**

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or at its website, <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> if a problem arises while creating an account, or while preparing or submitting an application. Be prepared to provide the application ID and your organization’s name. National Service Hotline hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical

issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

If you have questions about the program requirements or narrative instruction, please email [innovation@cns.gov](mailto:innovation@cns.gov) or call 202-606-3223. Please be sure also to reference the Frequently Asked Question document on the NOFA website: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp).

#### **D. Application Deadline**

Applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 27, 2012. Applications must arrive at CNCS by the deadline in order to be considered. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Notice of any such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants and on the NOFA website.

#### **Late Applications**

CNCS may consider an application submitted after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. The letter must be sent to [LateApplications@cns.gov](mailto:LateApplications@cns.gov) within the 24-hour period following the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address below in Section VII of this *Notice*, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service to avoid security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via e-Grants. Applications submitted by fax or emails will not be accepted.

#### **E. Intergovernmental Review**

Applicants under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

#### **F. Funding Restrictions**

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21 (2 CFR Part 220), A-122 (2 CFR Part 230), or A-87 (2 CFR Part 225), and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR Part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR Part 2543 or 2 CFR Part 315). See [www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars](http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars) for further information on the Circular(s) that apply to your organization. Also, awards will be subject to the law(s) under which the award is made (e.g., NCSA), as well as specific terms and conditions established in the cooperative agreement or defined in the Terms and Conditions of the award. Applicants will have an opportunity to negotiate conditions prior to acceptance of an award, if necessary.

## **G. Submitting Match Verification Documentation**

Social Innovation Fund applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet 50 percent of their cash match requirement at the time of the application. Signed letters verifying match, as well as all other required documentation, can be sent via email to [SIFApplication@cns.gov](mailto:SIFApplication@cns.gov) or via overnight carrier (non-U.S. Postal Service to avoid security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service) to the following address:

Corporation for National and Community Service  
ATTN: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/Social Innovation Fund Application  
1201 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20525

When submitting match verification by email, applicants should reference their application ID and **organization name in the subject line of their email**. Match verification, as well as all other documentation must be received by the deadline of March 27, 2012, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Submission of evidence of match by the application deadline is a compliance criterion.

## **V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

### **A. Goals of the Review and Selection Process**

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. As in the past, CNCS will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to eligible applications. In addition, CNCS staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a balanced set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and selection factors described in this *Notice*.

Specifically, the review and selection process is designed to:

#### **1. Identify outstanding eligible applications that show:**

- High alignment with selection criteria;
- Alignment with priorities identified in section I.C of this *Notice*; and
- Experience with and plans for subgrantee evaluation proposals that will build the level of evidence of effectiveness for each implemented intervention or program design.

#### **2. Compile a balanced portfolio based on the following characteristics:**

- Geographic representation;
- Issue areas and program focus; and
- Relative risks and opportunities posed by the proposed programs.

### **B. Review Criteria**

Assessments of each application will be considered using a weighting system with various program elements assigned a degree of importance expressed by their percentage value in an

overall score. The various categories for consideration in the review and the weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in Table 1 below.

| <b>Table 1: Application Review Criteria</b><br>Category | Percentage | Sub-Categories  | Sub-Sub categories           |
|---|------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Executive Summary                                    | 0          |   |                              |
| 2. Program Design                                       | 10         | a. Goals and Objectives                               |                              |
|   | 35         | b. Description of Activities                          | Subgrantee Selection (10)    |
|   |            |   | Proposal for Evaluation (15) |
|   |            | Proposal for Growing Subgrantee Impact (10)           |                              |
| 3. Organizational Capacity                              | 10         | a. History of Competitive Granting                    |                              |
|   |            | b. Experience Growing Program Impact                  |                              |
|   | 15         | c. Evaluation Experience                              |                              |
|   | 15         | d. Ability to Provide Program Support and Oversight   |                              |
|   |            | e. Ability to Provide Financial Support and Oversight |                              |
|   |            | f. Strategy for Sustainability                        |                              |
| 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy               | 15         | a. Budget Justification                               |                              |
|   |            | b. Description of Match Sources and Capacity          |                              |

In assessing applications, expert reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly describes and convincingly addresses the narrative guidelines provided in section VIII. Specifically, reviewers will be using the criteria listed below to evaluate the different sections of the application:

### **1. Application Executive Summary**

Applicants will be required to provide an Executive Summary of their applications. Executive Summaries will be used to determine compliance with requirements and eligibility for the competition, but will not be used by reviewers to assess the quality of applications.

## **2. Program Design (45%)**

In assessing Program Design, expert reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly describes and convincingly addresses the narrative guidelines provided in section VIII. Their analysis will include the following:

### **a. Goals and Objectives**

To what extent did the applicant:

- Clearly identify the target community or geographies that they will serve and the target issue(s) their programming will focus on?
- Make a persuasive case using statistical information for the need related to the issue area(s) identified in the target geographical area(s) listed?
- Clearly identify specific measurable outcomes that will be achieved through their proposed program?
- Make a compelling case for their ability to successfully support the focus, goals, and approach they propose?
- Provide a clear, logical theory of change that outlines their investment approach and proposed outcomes?
- Identify the value-added activities, including technical assistance or other services, that will be offered to subgrantees to support their success in achieving these outcomes?

### **b. Description of Activities**

#### *Subgrantee Selection*

To what extent did the applicant:

- Provide a clear profile of the type of subgrantee organization they hope to fund?
- Provide a clear and comprehensive plan for carrying out a competitive subgrantee selection process?
- Present a selection process that has a high likelihood of successfully identifying subgrantees that meet the Social Innovation Fund's requirements of having at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness, and are positioned to conduct evaluations that would achieve moderate or strong levels of evidence over a three to five year period?
- Provide a clear articulation of how they will assess applicants for readiness and capacity to implement program growth as a part of their participation in the Social Innovation Fund?
- Adequately propose a means of allocating grant awards so that larger sums are given to those subgrantees with higher levels of evidence of effectiveness to support the growth of their program impact?

#### *Proposal for Evaluation*

To what extent did the applicant:

- Describe anticipated program models that will be evaluated? Do these models have the potential to achieve at least moderate levels of evidence of effectiveness during their Social Innovation Fund grant period of three to five years?
- Explain how they will assess needs for and provide technical assistance to subgrantees as they design, implement, and monitor evaluations of their program models?
- If addressed, describe how they will work with an evaluation partner and what activities this partner will do to support the Social Innovation Fund portfolio?
- Describe an appropriate and detailed budget to support the cost of reasonable evaluation activities that will meet Social Innovation Fund evaluation requirements?

*Proposal for Growing Subgrantee Impact*

To what extent did the applicant:

- Articulate their theory or approach to growing effective subgrantee program models in alignment with their overall theory of change?
- Provide an appropriate list of characteristics the applicant will use to assess subgrantee capacity for growth?
- Include a description of how evidence of effectiveness will be used to determine when or how a program is well-situated for growth?
- Describe their means of supporting subgrantee growth through technical assistance or other resources?

### **3. Organizational Capacity (40%)**

#### **a. History of Competitive Grantmaking**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Have demonstrated experience selecting and awarding competitive grants to nonprofits?
- Demonstrate capacity to undertake the subgrant selection process outlined in their application?

#### **b. Experience Growing Program Impact**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Describe adequate examples of past efforts supporting grantee program growth through replication or expansion?
- Describe adequate resources to support successful subgrantee growth as proposed?
- Propose how best practices will be captured and shared, preferably based on successful past efforts?

#### **c. Evaluation Experience**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Demonstrate experience in managing and supporting evaluations of program models they have funded in the past?
- Demonstrate the capacity to apply evidence/evaluation results to decision-making and investment strategies?
- Have experience influencing and supporting its grantees to use evidence to improve program performance?
- Demonstrate their staff's capacity (or contracted capacity) to ensure successful evaluation of their subgrantees' program models?

**d. Ability to Provide Program Support and Oversight**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Describe compelling examples of setting and implementing goals with grantees?
- Present a qualified roster of staff members that have the experience and capacity to effectively implement the proposed program? This includes the involvement of management, board members, etc.
- Present a compelling plan to provide assistance or support to build subgrantee capacity as needed?
- Describe experience operating and overseeing programs comparable to the ones proposed in the identified priority issue area(s) of activity, including specific examples of prior accomplishments and outcomes in these area(s)?
- Describe a plan for developing subgrantee performance measurement systems and using these to improve subgrantee performance?
- Describe experience monitoring subgrantees for compliance against programmatic requirements?
- Describe a sufficient plan for subgrantee monitoring?
- Propose an approach to hold both subgrantees and themselves accountable for meeting program goals?

**e. Ability to Provide Financial Support and Oversight**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Provide a compelling case that they have the experience and staff capacity to successfully manage the proposed Social Innovation Fund grant program at both the intermediary and subgrantee level from a fiscal perspective?
- Describe a staffing plan that engages staff members with sufficient capacity and experience to be effective and compliant?
- Describe sufficient plans for ensuring compliance with federal guidelines at the intermediary and subgrantee level?
- If the applicant is new to federal funding, do they provide adequate evidence that they have the means and plan to acquire necessary capacity to ensure compliance?

**f. Strategy for Sustainability**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Provide a compelling statement of commitment to continue the Social Innovation Fund’s investment priorities beyond the life of the grant?
- Describe a successful strategy for ensuring subgrantees are positioned to continue evaluation and sustain program growth beyond the grant lifecycle?

**4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (15%)**

**a. Budget Justification**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Propose a reasonable and justifiable budget that will support the capacity necessary to achieve desired outputs and outcomes?
- Present a budget adequate to successfully support program activities, especially in regard to evaluation, supporting subgrantee program growth, and running a successful subgrantee selection process?
- If applicable, provide a compelling case for proposing higher program costs due to an intention to make subgrants in areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved?

**b. Description of Match Sources and Capacity**

To what extent does the applicant:

- Present a compelling plan for securing the total match commitment for their Social Innovation Fund program?
- Describe adequate plans or efforts to assist subgrantees to secure their required match?

**C. Additional Balancing Characteristics that will be Considered During the Review Process**

In selecting applicants to receive awards under this *Notice*, CNCS will assess the criteria listed above but will also take balancing criteria into consideration. CNCS staff will assess to what extent does the applicant:

- Propose programs that are likely to generate significant, measurable improvements in the economic well-being of individuals and families served by subgrantees?
- Significantly contribute to the diversity of the Social Innovation Fund grantee portfolio in terms of priority issues and geography, specifically those applicants that serve “significantly philanthropically underserved” geographic areas or geographic areas that are not being currently served by the Social Innovation Fund?

**D. Stages in the Review and Selection Process**

The stages of the Social Innovation Fund 2012 grant application review process are listed below. Please note that at any time when reviewing applications submitted in response to this *Notice*, CNCS may consider, with respect to any particular proposal, the factors and information identified in 45 C.F.R. §2522.470.

**1. Compliance Review**

CNCS staff will review all applications to determine compliance with match, deadline, and completeness requirements identified in Section III of this *Notice*. Applications that

are submitted by the deadline, are complete, and demonstrate that the applicant has met the match requirements will advance to the Initial Eligibility Review. Applications that do not meet each compliance criteria will be considered not responsive to the *Notice* and will not be further considered.

## **2. Initial Eligibility Review**

CNCS staff will review all compliant applications to confirm that they have been submitted by eligible organizations and that they have adequately identified what type of Social Innovation Fund is being proposed (i.e., issue-based or geographic-based). This review will not include reading the entire application. Applicants that meet these two eligibility criteria (as described in Section III of this *Notice*) will move on to the Expert Review.

## **3. Expert Review**

Expert reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy criteria. Each application will be reviewed by at least three expert reviewers. Reviewers will be recruited and selected on the basis of demonstrated expertise in social innovation, growing the impact of successful programs, nonprofit management, and/or program evaluation. All expert reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest or possible impairments to objectivity.

## **4. Post-Expert Review Quality Control**

After the external reviewers complete their assessment, staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used for:

- Applicants with identified discrepancies during the Expert Review;
- Applications for which there are significant panel anomalies; and

Applications identified for additional assessment will receive a Quality Control review. The Quality Control reviewer provides an assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses.

## **5. Selection of Applications for Internal Review**

Based on the results of the Expert Review, CNCS staff will determine which applications advance to Internal Review. Also, CNCS staff will take into consideration the priority issue and balancing characteristics identified in section I.C of this *Notice* and the selection criteria specified in section 198K(h) of NCSA such as:

- Selecting applicants who propose programs in geographic areas that are not being currently served by the Social Innovation Fund;
- Selecting a diverse set of applicants in terms of issue areas; and
- Applicants that take into account broad community perspectives and support.

## **6. Internal Review**

CNCS staff will also assess Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections of the application, particularly focusing on applicants' capacity to successfully implement their proposed program in accordance

with Social Innovation Fund requirements, strength of community relationships and collaborations, opportunity for scale, potential to impact public discussion, and rigor and sophistication of evidence and evaluation.

### **7. Clarification**

Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. Clarifying information is used by CNCS staff in making final recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for clarifying information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration. Applicants should be prepared to provide documentation supporting their eligibility for the competition and other support documentation described in their narrative or requested by CNCS.

CNCS staff will determine which applications to recommend for selection based on the results of the Expert Review, Internal Review, and Clarification as well as the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

### **8. Selection for Funding**

The Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio of Social Innovation Fund grantees based on staff recommendations and considering overall quality, priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above. Selected applicants will then enter into negotiations of cooperative agreements with CNCS.

### **9. Feedback to Applicants**

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive information about the Expert Review, and if applicable, the Internal Review pertaining to their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided during clarification.

## **VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. Award Date**

CNCS will award cooperative agreements following the grantee selection announcement. CNCS anticipates announcing the results of this competition by August 2012. CNCS anticipates the awards will be issued by mid-September, 2012. The government is not obligated to make any awards as a result of this *Notice*.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

The Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be subject to and incorporate the requirements of Section 198K of the NCSA of 1990, as well as other applicable sections of the NCSA. The NGA will also incorporate the approved application and budget as part of the binding commitments under any award. Awardees will be subject to the following (as applicable):

- 2 CFR Part 175—Award term for trafficking in persons.
- 2 CFR Parts 180 and 2200—Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension.
- 2 CFR Part 215 and 45 CFR Part 2543—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-110).
- 2 CFR Part 220—Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21).
- 2 CFR Part 225—Cost Principles for State, Local and Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87).
- 2 CFR Part 230—Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122).
- 45 CFR Part 2541—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants And Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.
- 45 CFR Part 2545—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).
- 45 CFR Part 2555—Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance.
- The Single Audit Act (31 U.S.C. Chapter 75) and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

### **C. Use of Materials**

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and sub-grantees, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so.

### **D. Reporting Requirements**

Grantees for this competition must identify the critical outcomes of the work, indicators of success in this work, and how progress can be judged or measured. Grantees will be required to report quarterly on agreed-upon performance measures through performance progress reports. Specific guidance on the collection of data against these standardized measures will be provided upon award. CNCS may also require an independent assessment of grantee performance. Grantees will also be required to complete semi-annual Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) through the CNCS eGrants and Department of Health and Human Services' reporting systems.

If you receive an award, you will be required to report at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for your organization and for your subgrantees. You must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

In addition, CNCS expects intermediaries to hold subgrantees accountable for their progress against agreed-upon indicators of success. The intermediaries will be asked to report subgrantee performance information to CNCS.

### **E. Performance Progress Reports**

Quarterly narrative progress reports must be submitted using CNCS' web-based grants management system, eGrants, no later than 30 days after the close of each reporting period. The reports will include:

- Progress towards identified performance goals;
- Analysis of subgrantee program progress and performance measures;
- Progress towards evaluation and scaling efforts across the subgrantee portfolio;
- Discussion of any problems observed or experienced; and
- Documented success stories at the grantee and subgrantee level.

## **F. Final Financial Reports**

In addition to submission of required semi-annual reports, the grantee completing an agreement period will be required to submit a final report that is cumulative over the entire award period and consistent with the close-out requirements of CNCS' Office of Grants Management. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the agreement and is in lieu of the last semi-annual FFR.

## **G. Other Data-Collection Requirements**

CNCS will require Social Innovation Fund grantees to develop final, detailed plans for selecting subgrantees and for evaluating their funded interventions. These plans will be reviewed and approved by CNCS. Grantees also will develop final detailed plans for growing subgrantee program impact that will be reviewed by CNCS but will not require approval.

The subgrantee selection plan will include the following:

- The estimated number or range of subgrant awards that will be made;
- The estimated range of subgrant award amounts;
- A description of:
  - How key subgrant eligibility criteria required by this *Notice* will be determined, particularly the level of evidence currently established for proposed subgrantee programs;
  - The proposed review and selection process; and
  - Who will review grant applications and how the process will ensure appropriate conflict of interest policies are in place.

The evaluation strategy and individual evaluation plans will address key questions, such as the following:

- What are the specific questions the evaluation(s) intend(s) to answer?
- What type of impact research design(s) (e.g., randomized control trial, quasi-experimental) do you hope to conduct? Why is this evaluation design appropriate for the program's stage of development, and what useful information do you hope to gain?
- How will the proposed research designs achieve the moderate or strong level of evidence over three to five years?
- What is the timeline and estimated budget for the evaluation(s)?
- Who will conduct the evaluation(s) and how will the process you will employ maintain independence and ensure high quality reports?

The plan for growing program impact will document each intermediary's approach and goals for subgrantee growth including:

- How growth is connected to the subgrantees' plan to improve its level of evidence;
- The estimated number of additional people expected to benefit from the program each year due to growth;
- The strategies subgrantees will utilize to generate growth in the number of people impacted, e.g., through expansions in current locations, replication of the program model to additional locations or other methods that do not require physical expansion (e.g. expanded use of technology, adoption of wide-scale policy mandates, etc.);
- The services, including training and technical assistance, the intermediary will provide to subgrantees to facilitate the planned growth; and
- How the intermediary will track and assess actual growth of impact as measured compared to the estimates included in their plan.

Grantees also must:

- Identify and document effective practices to addressing critical community challenges in order to share those lessons broadly;
- Participate in a Social Innovation Fund learning community that will work collaboratively to capture and share lessons and insights broadly to inform the work of the larger philanthropic, nonprofit, and public sectors;
- Meet as necessary with their CNCS program officer, or other staff or consultants.

## **H. Continuation Funding Information and Requirements**

As mentioned in the Award Information section (II.A.2), CNCS will require all Social Innovation Fund grantees to participate in a continuation process in order to receive funding for activities in years 2 through 5. Funding is contingent upon appropriations.

In order to receive continued funding, grantees must demonstrate compliance with grant conditions and satisfactory performance with respect to key program goals and requirements, including having secured sufficient matching funds and making appropriate progress in advancing the evaluations and growth of subgrantees. Specifically, over the course of their grant, grantees will need to demonstrate that they have:

- Completed a competitive subgrantee selection process in alignment with the approved subgrantee selection plan, including ensuring that all subgrantees have at least preliminary levels of evidence;
- Allocated their subgrant funds and formulated plans for subgrantee growth that are positively correlated with each subgrantee's level of evidence;
- Secured approval of and, as appropriate, effectively implemented evaluation plans expected to achieve at least a moderate level of evidence of effectiveness over the course of their grant period;
- Met additional program requirements or expectations as communicated in this *Notice* or by CNCS staff;
- Maintained compliance with federal requirements at both the grantee and subgrantee level; and

- Made satisfactory progress towards performance goals and objectives.

Grantees will be held accountable for meeting these expectations and, likewise should have processes in place to assess and monitor their subgrantees' progress towards these expectations. Should a subgrantee or grantee fail to meet these expectations, consequences will ensue and may include the return of grant or subgrantee funds or reduction and/or refusal of future annual awards.

## VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

This *Notice* is available at [http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp). The TTY number is (800) 833-3722. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (202) 606-7570, or send an e-mail to [innovation@cns.gov](mailto:innovation@cns.gov).

For technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, call the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or use the following link: <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask>. Be prepared to provide the application ID, your organization's name, and the NOFA to which you are applying. National Service Hotline hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

For application submission material, when applicable, the mailing address is:

Corporation for National and Community Service  
ATTN: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/Social Innovation Fund Application  
1201 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20525

CNCS will host technical assistance calls and/or workshops to answer questions from potential applicants about this funding opportunity, including submitting the application through eGrants, CNCS's web-based application system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in these sessions. The first call will be held on February 16, 2012 at 2 p.m. Eastern Time. Call-in information for this technical assistance call and additional technical assistance calls will be available on CNCS's web site at:

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp).

For additional information on the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, go to:

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/09\\_0331\\_recovery\\_summary.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/09_0331_recovery_summary.pdf).

**Public Burden Statement:** The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires CNCS to inform all potential persons who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)). This collection is approved under OMB Control # 3045-0129 (CNCS Universal Application).

## VIII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The application must provide a well-designed plan with a clear and compelling justification for awarding the requested funds. Guidance for completing the narrative sections is provided below. In evaluating your application, reviewers will assess the narrative on the basis of your Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

This *Notice* contains all application instructions. Application instructions are formatted to correspond to fields in eGrants and are clarified through this *Notice*.

The completed application will consist of the following components which will be described in detail below:

- A. Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Facesheet
  - 1. Applicant Information
  - 2. Application Information
- B. Narratives (OMB Control# 3045-0129)
  - 1. Executive Summary
  - 2. Program Design
  - 3. Organizational Capacity
  - 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- C. Standard Form 424A Budget
  - 1. Budget Worksheet
  - 2. Budget Requirements
  - 3. Matching Funds
- D. Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications
- E. Optional Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity (*Optional*; OMB Control# 1894-0010)

**Clarification Summary and Continuation Changes are not relevant for this application. Please enter N/A for not applicable under these narrative sections.**

#### **A. Standard Form 424 Facesheet**

The Standard Form-424 Facesheet (SF-424) is required for applications submitted for federal assistance. The SF-424 contents are duplicated in eGrants, although the format is different.

Please note that the SF-424 is **automatically generated** by completing the data elements in the eGrants system. When completing the application in eGrants, many of the fields will be populated with information entered during the organization's registration process.

##### **1. Applicant Info**

Please note that the *Authorized Representative* name is blank. You cannot select a name for this field. Instead, the Authorized Representative will need to have his/her own account to click on the Assurances and Certifications at the end of the application. (Attachment A)

Under *Project Information* select, "Enter New" and choose a title for the proposed project. It is possible to enter another address for the project, which may or may not be

the same as that of the Legal Applicant.

*Select a Project Initiative:* Choose the operational model which best describes your Social Innovation Fund application from the following options:

- SIF—Geographic Healthy Futures
- SIF—Geographic Opportunity
- SIF—Geographic Youth
- SIF—Geographic Multiple Issues
- SIF—Issue Area Healthy Futures
- SIF—Issue Area Opportunity
- SIF—Issue Area Youth

To select an individual as the *Project Director*, choose a name from the pull-down menu or add a new contact.

## **2. Application Info**

*Areas affected by the project:* List only the largest political or municipal entities affected (e.g., counties and cities).

Enter the dates for the *proposed project start and end* dates. Your project period is up to five years and must begin no later than September 30, 2012.

*Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs:* This program is NOT subject to Executive Order 12372.

*Delinquent on any federal debt:* Check the appropriate box. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit allowances, loans, and taxes. If Yes, type your explanation in the text box provided.

*State Application Identifier:* Enter N/A.

**Note:** Falsification or concealment of a material fact or submission of false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations to any department or agency of the United States Government may result in a fine or imprisonment for not more than five (5) years, or both. (18 USC § 1001).

## **B. Narratives**

The application narrative comprises four separate sections. The four sections include:

1. Executive Summary
2. Program Design
  - a. Goals and Objectives
  - b. Description of Program Activities
3. Organizational Capacity

- a. History of Competitive Granting
  - b. Evaluation Experience
  - c. Experience Growing Program Impact
  - d. Ability to Provide Program Oversight and Support
  - e. Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight and Support
  - f. Strategy for Sustainability
- 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
    - a. Budget Justification
    - b. Description of Match Sources and Capacity

For the entire narrative section, the maximum page limit is 55 double-spaced pages. We recommend the following page distributions for each component:

- 1. Executive Summary: approximately 3 double-spaced pages;
- 2. Program Design: approximately 22 double-spaced pages;
- 3. Organizational Capacity: approximately 20 double-spaced pages; and
- 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy: approximately 10 double-spaced pages.

**Please note that bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into eGrants.**

### **1. Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary should be completed using the following guide. Executive summaries for all applications will be made public and posted to CNCS' website. Executive summaries will be used in the initial eligibility review to assess an applicant's status as an existing grantmaking institution or an eligible partnership, and to confirm its identification as either a geographically-based or issue-based Social Innovation Fund (see section III.D of this *Notice*). Therefore, the summary should contain clear and concise indications of both eligibility criteria.

#### *Title*

For the title of the Executive Summary, applicants should use the name of the sole or lead intermediary (if an eligible partnership).

#### *Contents*

Applicants should provide a summary of the proposed program including the following:

#### Basic Information:

- A description of the organization that indicates it is an existing grantmaking institution or eligible partnership;
- Identify as either a geographically-based Social Innovation Fund or issue-based Social Innovation Fund;
- Identify priority issue area(s) of focus;
- Identify key measurable outcomes the organization's investments will improve;
- Identify specific local geographic areas where subgrantees are likely to be located (if applying as an issue-based Social Innovation Fund);

- Identify other organizations that will play a key role in the implementation of the strategy to select, support, monitor, or evaluate subgrantees. If applying as an eligible partnership, **clearly identify** the other members of the partnership;
- Identify the grant amount being requesting and the proposed grant period;
- Identify the main sources of match that has been have secured;
- Indicate if the proposal addresses the 2012 priority:
  - Explain the ability of the program to generate significant, measurable improvements in the economic well-being of individuals and families served by subgrantees;

Project Overview:

- Provide an overview of the proposed program and the need(s) the program will meet;
- Describe the specific issue area(s) the program will address and the measurable outcomes it proposes to improve;
- Describe the theory of change the program will implement to rationalize the measurable outcomes it hopes to improve;
- Provide an overview of the proposed subgrant portfolio strategy including selection, evaluation, and growth of subgrantees;
- Briefly describe the experience, expertise, and other strengths or assets the organization will contribute to successfully realizing your identified outcomes; and
- Identify major sources of match that have secured identifying any additional funding partners.

## 2. Program Design

In this section, applicants should identify and describe the key objectives of their Social Innovation Fund portfolio, their theory of change, and their overall approach to selecting and supporting subgrantees in order to achieve their objectives.

### a. Goals and Objectives

#### *Social Innovation Fund Structure*

First, applicants must identify themselves as either a geographically-based Social Innovation Fund or an issue-based Social Innovation Fund, as defined in this *Notice*.

Applicants applying as a **Geographically-Based Social Innovation Fund** must do the following:

- Describe the target community, state or region that the organization proposes to serve;
- Describe the specific priority issue area(s) on which the organization proposes to focus – i.e. Youth Development , Economic Opportunity, and/or Healthy Futures – and the statistical information that supports this focus;
- Provide statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area;
- Describe the specific measurable outcomes the organization proposes to improve;

Applicants applying as an **Issue-Based Social Innovation Fund** must do the following:

- Describe the specific issue area on which the organization proposes to focus – i.e. Youth Development, Economic Opportunity, and/or Healthy Futures;
- Describe the target geographies which the program is likely to serve and the rationale for selecting these particular geographies. Include the measure the organization will use to confirm the targeted communities qualify as low-income communities (see requirement I.F of this *Notice*);
- Provide statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in your identified issue area; and
- Describe the measurable outcomes related to the issue area the organization proposes to improve.

#### *Theory of Change*

Applicants must describe the theory of change relevant to their proposed program and the investment strategy they intend to employ. Applicants should convey an intentional approach to solving community problems through their subgrant investments and clearly explain (1) the types of organizations they will invest in and why, and (2) the value-added activities, including technical assistance or other services, they will provide their subgrantees in order to align them with the theory of change and achieve the desired outcomes. This section should also include justification for why the organization is well-equipped to successfully employ the proposed theory of change and will be successful in achieving the identified measurable outcomes for the geographic or issue-area identified.

- *Optional Identification of Priority Issues*

The Social Innovation Fund will give priority consideration to applicants who propose programs that are likely to generate significant, measurable improvements in the economic well-being of individuals and families served by subgrantees. The Social Innovation Fund is also interested in applications that contribute to the diversity of the grantee portfolio in terms of programs that serve “significantly philanthropically underserved” geographic areas or geographic areas that are not being currently served by the Social Innovation Fund.

If applicable, applicants should:

- Specifically explain how their program will generate significant, measurable improvements in the economic well-being of individuals and families served by subgrantees;
- Identify the measure(s) that will be used to capture this improvement and either identify or provide examples of how subgrantee programs will create this effect;
- Describe their intentions to provide subgrants to nonprofit community organizations that will serve specific geographic areas that are either “significantly philanthropically underserved” or will address the needs of low income communities within regions that are not being served by current Social Innovation Fund-funded programs; and

- Define the proportion of their funds they will direct to subgrantees working in these areas.

### **b. Description of Activities**

The unique role of a Social Innovation Fund grantee is marked by three major activities: subgranting funds to competitively selected nonprofit community organizations, supporting the growth of subgrantee program impact, and managing an overall subgrantee evaluation strategy. Grantees will likely provide various forms of technical assistance and support to subgrantees as they expand and evaluate their programs. Applicants for the Social Innovation Fund should provide a plan for how they will go about each of these activities. Guidelines are defined below.

#### *Subgrantee Selection*

In this section of the narrative, applicants must describe the process by which they will identify and competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees in their targeted geographies. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of high-quality subgrantees with at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness in the program model they intend to implement, and relationships with or plans to engage experts, leaders, and community stakeholders in relevant issue or geographic areas. Applicants should explain how their subgrant selection process meets the definition of a competitive subgrant competition as defined in section I.H of this *Notice*. The plan also should include:

- The estimated number or range of subgrant awards that will be made;
- The estimated range of subgrant award amounts;
- A description of:
  - A profile of the subgrantees the organization hopes to select;
  - The criteria that will be used to determine whether an organization is a strong fit for the organization's theory of change and/or will be able to successfully contribute to its outcome measures;
  - On what basis the amount of each subgrant award will be determined.  
**Please note: in line with purpose and goals of the Social Innovation Fund, the level of evidence demonstrated by subgrantees will be a key criterion, and larger sums should be allocated to organizations with higher levels of evidence;**
  - A clear description of how levels of evidence will be reviewed and assessed to ensure subgrantees meet the minimum requirement of preliminary evidence when they are selected, and that they are positioned to achieve moderate or strong evidence over the proposed grant period;
  - A clear articulation of how the organization will assess applicants for readiness and capacity to implement both program growth and the rigorous evaluation plans required as a part of their participation in the Social Innovation Fund; and
  - A general timeline or timeframe outlining when stages of the selection process would be completed.

*Please note:* the proposed subgrant plan and timeline must demonstrate that it can be completed within six months of grant award. Pre-selected subgrantees will not be accepted. All subgrantees must be selected through the open competitive processes referenced in Section I.H of this *Notice*.

#### *Proposal for Evaluation*

Applicants should describe the initial approach and overall plan for evaluating the program models anticipated for inclusion in their Social Innovation Fund subgrantee portfolios. As stated in section I. J, all subgrantees are expected to achieve at least moderate levels of evidence by the end of their three to five year grant period. CNCS does not expect that applicants will have a formalized evaluation plan at the time of application, and will work with awarded grantees to finalize and approve their plans throughout their grant period.

- Describe the maturity of the program models that will be evaluated and the level of evidence these models are likely to have prior to entrance into the Social Innovation Fund program. Subgrantees must have at least preliminary levels of evidence.
- Describe the evaluation strategy for ensuring these models will achieve at least moderate levels of evidence over their three to five year grant period.
- Describe the plan for providing technical assistance to subgrantees to design, implement, and monitor evaluations of their program models. What kinds of assistance will be provided? How will subgrantees' needs be assessed? Who will coordinate and provide this assistance?
- Describe intentions (if any) to work with a contracted evaluation partner to help subgrantees meet Social Innovation Fund evaluation requirements. What qualities and characteristics of a contracted evaluation partner will be required?
- The Social Innovation Fund recognizes at the time of this application actual costs associated with evaluation may be difficult to accurately predict. Please provide an estimated budget covering all evaluation-related activities planned for the three to five year grant period. Present each budget year separately and indicate the major activities and costs associated with those activities (i.e. the cost of staff and/or contractors, travel necessary for design and implementation, technical assistance to subgrantees, and costs for coordinating your portfolio's overall evaluation activities). Please indicate the costs that may be paid at the intermediary and/or subgrantee level.

#### *Proposal for Growing Subgrantee Impact*

Applicants must articulate their strategy for growing the impact of selected subgrant program models. Applicants should provide a strategy or plan for growing program impact that is aligned with their proposed theory of change and includes the following:

- Describe the theory or approach to growing effective subgrantee program models. How is this aligned with the theory of change described previously;

- An example of successful program model growth, replication or expansion efforts undertaken through the organization's past investments;
- A list of the characteristics that will use to assess a subgrantee's readiness for growth of their program model. This should include an articulation of how evidence of effectiveness is or will be used to determine a program's readiness for growth;
- A description of how subgrantee investments may be used to accommodate growth (i.e., replicating programs at new sites, increasing capacity to expand services at an original site, etc.); and
- A description of the specific forms of technical assistance the applicant intends to provide subgrantees in order to support growth.

### **3. Organizational Capacity**

This section demonstrates that the applicant has the experience and capacity to successfully implement the proposed grant program and to adhere to the requirements laid forth in this *Notice*.

#### **a. History of Competitive Grantmaking**

As eligible grantmaking institutions, applicants should have ample experience in selecting grantees and making grants. In this section, applicants should address the following:

- Describe their organization's experience selecting and awarding competitive grants to non-profit organizations;
- Demonstrate capacity to undertake the subgrant selection process outlined in their application; and
- Describe the staff expertise, contractors, and/or board members who will be engaged in this process.

#### **b. Experience Growing Program Impact**

Applicants should describe situations in which they have supported grantee growth. Applicants also should address the following:

- Provide specific examples of the effectiveness of the investment approach, including examples demonstrating your success supporting grantee program growth;
- Describe the kinds of resources (e.g., data systems; staff) available to assist with subgrantee growth; and
- Describe how they will capture and share best practices in terms of replicating or expanding programs across your portfolio to improve implementation. Give examples of how you have achieved this in the past.

#### **c. Evaluation Experience**

Program evaluation is a critical element of the Social Innovation Fund. Applicants should provide specific examples of their experience with evaluation management and support as well as the ways in which they have applied evidence in their decision-making.

- Describe how the organization has managed and supported evaluations of

- program models you have funded in the past;
- Describe how the organization has used evidence of program effectiveness to make decisions about your investment strategies in the past;
- Describe how the organization has supported previous grantees in using evidence to improve their program's performance;
- Describe organizational capacity and staff' skills to adhere to the evaluation requirements for the Social Innovation Fund program, particularly regarding the implementation of evaluation designs that will produce moderate or strong levels of evidence; and
- Will additional staff or contractors be hired to support and coordinate evaluation efforts? If so, describe any past experience in managing such efforts.

**d. Ability to Provide Program Support and Oversight**

Applicants must establish that they have the skills and capacities required to effectively manage programs of the nature they are proposing.

- Describe the commitment to long-term relationships with subgrantees, including the process by which shared short- and long-term goals are established and are communicated and negotiated;
- Identify the key program positions within organization relevant to proposed grant program. Describe the relevant background and experience of key staff members and their respective roles, or plans to recruit, select, train, and support additional staff, and their proposed roles;
- Describe the organization's management and staff structure and how the Board of Directors, administrators, and staff members will be used;
- Explain what resources and support will be provided to build subgrantee capacity in key areas such as leadership development, financial management, data management, strategic planning, and communications;
- Describe the organization's experience in the proposed priority issue area(s) of activity and your experience operating and overseeing programs comparable to the ones proposed, including specific examples of your prior accomplishments and outcomes in these area(s);
- Describe how the organization will help grantees design performance measurement systems appropriate to the maturity of the program and how it will help subgrantees improve performance;
- Describe experience monitoring subgrantees for site compliance against programmatic requirements;
- Describe the plan for subgrantee monitoring; and
- Describe the proposed approach to accountability for your organization and your subgrantees. Provide examples of and justification for potential subgrantee-level and intermediary-level metrics.

**e. Ability to Provide Financial Support and Oversight**

Applicants should describe the extent to which their organization, or proposed partnership, has key personnel with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and

experience to provide fiscal oversight of subgrantees. Additionally, applicants should describe any specific experience in providing fiscal oversight of federal funds at the grantee and/or subgrantee level.

- Describe the experience and infrastructure the organization has in managing grants from other entities;
- Identify the current organizational budget, what percentage of the budget this grant would represent, and address the implications for your organization;
- Describe how the organization will ensure compliance with federal requirements;
- Describe the capacity to manage a federal grant and to provide on-site monitoring of the financial and other systems required to administer a federal grant by a subgrantee; and
- Explain what resources and support the organization will provide to build subgrantee capacity in financial management.

#### **f. Strategy for Sustainability**

Applicants should describe their commitment to continuing the Social Innovation Fund's style of investment beyond the life of the grant. Describe the organization's intentions and strategy for continuing to fund and support grantee evaluation and movement toward more rigorous evidence as well as successful programmatic growth for promising and proven program models.

### **4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

#### **a. Budget Justification**

Applicants must provide explanation and/or justification for the various budget items they request as a part of their proposed Social Innovation Fund program. In this narrative section, applicants should:

- Provide a brief and succinct description and cost estimate for the major sections of the budget, as created using the SF 424 Budget Instructions and Worksheet provided below and created in eGrants. Specifically, identify your personnel expenses, contractual and consultant services, training, evaluation, and subgrant award costs (listed in "Other"). These cost descriptions should be no more than a sentence or two per item.
- Discuss the adequacy of the budget to support the program design including how it is sufficient to support the program activities and how it is linked to your desired outputs and outcomes. Specifically, describe the costs associated with your proposed competitive subgrant selection process, program evaluation, and technical assistance to subgrantees, including costs that may be paid for with resources other than federal or matching funds. If evaluations will be paid for out of granted subgrantee funds, please indicate such and include an estimate for determining the amount of grant funding that will be used to cover subgrantee evaluation;
- Demonstrate how the program has or will obtain diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;

- *Optional:* If program costs will be higher because the program proposes to serve areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved, please explain.

#### **b. Description of Match Sources and Capacity**

At the time of submission of the application, applicants must demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent of their first year matching funds.

Applicants may demonstrate cash-on-hand by a statement from the Chief Financial Officer or other officer that the organization has established a reserve of otherwise uncommitted funds for the purposes of performing a Social Innovation Fund grant. Applicants may demonstrate commitments by a dated and signed letter from each donor/foundation, indicating the amount of funds committed for the specific use of supporting the Social Innovation Fund grant. Such a letter must contain a firm commitment to provide the applicant the stated funding upon award of a Social Innovation Fund grant by CNCS. Please see the section in this *Notice* titled “Additional Documents – Match Verification” for further guidance on how to submit this documentation.

In this narrative section, applicants should:

- Include a discussion of the additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them. In the budget, applicants must list the sources of their match funds;
- Describe the efforts they will undertake to assist subgrantees to secure their match. If the applicant plans to fundraise on behalf of its subgrantees, indicate that and describe plans for doing so; and
- Describe the extent to which they propose to provide matching funds in excess of the minimum requirement.

**Clarification Summary and Continuation Changes are not relevant to this application. Please enter N/A for not applicable under these narrative sections.**

#### **C. Standard Form 424A Budget**

The budget should focus on the first year of the grant and should describe how grant funds will be used to effectively support activities described in the proposal narrative. Do not include unexplained amounts, amounts for miscellaneous or contingency costs, or unallowable expenses such as entertainment costs. Round all figures to the nearest dollar. Refer to the federal cost principles at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html> for information on allowable costs in federal grants.

**Before You Begin:** In eGrants, the preparation of a detailed budget provides the data that creates the summary budget and the budget narrative. The detailed budget should provide a full explanation of associated costs including their purpose, justification, and the basis of your calculations. Where appropriate, calculations should be presented in an equation format, identifying the number of persons involved with the event, the cost per person or unit, and/or the

annual salary cost.

Because of the required one-to-one match for Social Innovation Fund grantees, the budget must reflect **total** costs being distributed equally between the federal and grantee shares, but individual categories **do not** have to be equally distributed.

### **1. Budget Worksheet**

Use the Budget Worksheet as a guide in preparing your budget. The format below will mirror what applicants will see in eGrants.

- A. Personnel Expenses** – Include the portion of principal staff time attributed directly to the operation of the project. List each staff position and a brief statement of responsibilities for each in the ‘Position/Title’ field. For each position, also include the annual salary, and the percentage of staff time that will apply to the grant.
- B. Personnel Fringe Benefits** – Include costs of benefit(s) for the project staff. Applicants may identify and calculate each benefit or show cost as a percentage of all salaries.
- C. Project Staff Travel** – We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for at least two staff members to attend three CNCS-sponsored meetings. These include a new grantee orientation and the Annual Grantee Meeting, both traditionally held in Washington, DC in the fall.

Describe the purposes for other planned staff travel. Costs allowable are transportation, lodging, subsistence, and other related expenses for local and outside the project area travel.

- D. Equipment** – Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of \$5,000 (five thousand) or more per unit (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Include items that do not meet this definition in section E. Supplies.
- E. Supplies** – Include the funds for the purchase of consumable supplies and materials that do not fit the definition above. Applicants must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 (one thousand) or more. Applicants should provide the calculation for cost determinations.
- F. Contractual and Consultant Services** – Applicants may include costs for consultants related to the project’s operations. Consultants used for evaluation should be included in section H. Evaluation. Where applicable, indicate the daily rate for consultants.
- G. Training** – Applicants may include the costs associated with training of staff working directly on the project, especially training that specifically enhances staff project implementation and professional skills.

**H. Evaluation** – Include costs for project evaluation activities, such as use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation and other costs specifically for this activity. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable. If subgrantee evaluations will be paid at the subgrantee level using subgrant include them in section I. Other.

**I. Other Costs** – Please enter all subgrant costs in a line titled, “Subgrants.” The amount entered for the CNCS share should reflect at least 80% of total requested federal funds. As with other categories, the grantee share of subgrant funds does not need to equal the CNCS share.

Please include a line titled” Criminal History Background Checks” and enter costs for criminal history background checks for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, stipend or similar payment from the grant (CNCS or non-CNCS share).

Additional costs in this section may include office space rental, utilities, and telephone and Internet expenses that directly involve program staff and are not part of the organization’s indirect cost/admin cost. If shared with other projects or activities, you must prorate the costs equitably. List each item and provide a justification in the budget.

**J. Administrative Costs** – In this section, applicants should include costs that will not be charged directly to any of the previously mentioned budget categories (e.g., administrative overhead, rent, IT costs, etc.). If you have a federally approved indirect cost (IDC) rate you must use it unless authorized by CNCS to use another method. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage). It is at your discretion whether or not to use your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate under the Rate Claimed field.

**K. Source of Funds** – Describe the grantee match contribution for Section II by clearly indicating the source(s), and the amount (or estimate). You may enter this information in any category in the Purpose-Calculation field.

Note: You will be prevented from validating your budget in eGrants if you do not meet the dollar-for-dollar cash match. You will receive an error message that states, “Grantee share must be greater than or equal to CNCS share.”

## **2. Budget Requirements**

Applicants must submit a proposed first year budget that includes both federal and match funding as part of their application. If an application is selected for award, CNCS will determine the final amount of the award of federal funds, and will negotiate a final budget. Upon award, compliance with the approved budget will be a material term and condition of the cooperative agreement with the Social Innovation Fund intermediary.

Proposed and final budgets may only include allowable costs as defined in the applicable cost principles for the organization —

- 2 CFR Part 220—Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21);
- 2 CFR Part 225—Cost Principles for State, Local and Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87); and
- 2 CFR Part 230—Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122).

Applicants that have not previously applied for federal grant funds should understand that “allowable costs” under federal awards do not necessarily include all costs that the organization will incur in order to perform their awards. For example, the costs of raising funds in order to meet the nonfederal share of the budget (“matching funds”) are not allowable costs under OMB cost principles. The cost principles implement long standing government-wide policy decisions on the use of federal grant funds and applicants should ensure that they are fully aware of requirements in the applicable OMB circular while preparing their budgets.

The proposed and final budgets may only include actual expenditures by the applicant organization. **The value of any in-kind goods or services provided to the applicant cannot be included in the proposed or final budgets.**

The budgets will allocate allowable costs to either the federal or non-federal share of the total budget. At least 80 percent of the federal share must be awarded to subgrantees; the balance may go toward the intermediary’s program support costs, including evaluation, knowledge management, and Social Innovation Fund implementation.

The non-federal share of the budget must equal or exceed the federal share of the budget (this implements the dollar-for-dollar cash match requirement). There is no requirement that the non-federal share of the budget “mirror” or be allocated on the same basis as the federal share of the budget. For example, it is not required that 80 percent of the grantee’s share of funds be allocated to subgrantees, as is required for the federal share.

As described in the OMB cost principles, applicant budgets (other than the amounts budgeted for subgrants) will include a combination of direct and indirect costs. Applicants with approved indirect cost rates for federal grants must use those rates for any indirect costs they include in their budgets. CNCS will work with applicants selected for award who do not have approved federal indirect cost rates to help them develop and obtain approval for their rates.

### **3. Matching Funds**

The non-federal share of the budget represents the dollar-for-dollar matching funds requirement under this *Notice*. Any organization that receives an award under this *Notice* is responsible for securing the necessary matching funds. Matching funds may come from state, local, or private sources, which may include state or local agencies, businesses, private philanthropic organizations, or individuals. Federal funds may not be used towards the match requirement. Please see Section IV.G for information on submitting your match

verification.

Additionally:

- If the applicant is an eligible partnership that includes a State Commission or a local government office, the state or local government involved must provide not less than 30 percent and not more than 50 percent of the matching funds.
- CNCS is particularly interested in applicants that demonstrate that federal funds are generating additional or new private sector funds.
- CNCS is also particularly interested in applicants that present both a strong capacity to raise additional dollars to be provided to subgrantees, and a serious commitment to share the fundraising burden for their subgrantees.

#### **D. Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications**

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify
- Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully (Attachment A). The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or his/her designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check your entire application to make sure that there are no errors before submitting it. eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission when you verify the application. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant's authorized representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account to proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

***Note: Anyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account.*** Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account."

## *ASSURANCES*

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the applicant:

- Has the legal authority to apply for federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
- Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the state, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
- Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their position for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
- Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
- Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the nineteen statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 CFR 900, Subpart F).
- Will comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290dd-3 and 290ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
- Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of federal participation in purchases.
- Will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
- Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C 276a and 276a-77), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C 276c and 18 U.S.C. 874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333), regarding labor standards for Federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
- Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires the recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
- Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved state management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C 1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).

- Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C 1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
- Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16U.S.C. 469a-l et seq.).
- Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
- Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
- Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
- Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.
- Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, application guidelines, and policies governing this program.

### **For AmeriCorps State and National Applicants ONLY**

*If you are not applying for a grant through AmeriCorps\*State and National, you may ignore this section.*

- Will comply with all rules regarding prohibited activities, including those stated in applicable Notice, grant provisions, and program regulations, and will ensure that no assistance made available by the Corporation will be used to support any such prohibited activities.
- Will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions in the national service laws, which provide that an individual with responsibility for the operation of a project or program that receives assistance under the national service laws shall not discriminate against a participant in, or member of the staff of, such project or program on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability, or on the basis of religion. (NOTE: the prohibition on religious discrimination does not apply to the employment of any staff member paid with non-Corporation funds or paid with Corporation funds but employed with the organization operating the project prior to or on the date the grant was awarded. If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, your organization may be entitled, under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, to receive federal funds and yet maintain that hiring practice, even though the national service legislation includes a restriction on religious discrimination in employment of staff hired to work on a Corporation-funded project and paid with Corporation grant funds. (42 U.S.C. §§ 5057(c) and 12635(c)). For the circumstances under which this may occur, please see the document “Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith-Based Applicants for Grants” on the Corporation’s website at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/fbci/effect-rfra.pdf>.
- Will comply with all other federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination, including any self-evaluation requirements. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; and (i) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
- Will provide, in the design, recruitment, and operation of any AmeriCorps program, for broad-based input from – (1) the community served, the municipality and government of the county (if appropriate) in which the community is located, and potential participants in the program; and (2) community-based agencies with a demonstrated record of

experience in providing services and local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, if these entities exist in the area to be served by the program;

- Will, prior to the placement of participants, consult with the appropriate local labor organization, if any, representing employees in the area who are engaged in the same or similar work as that proposed to be carried out by an AmeriCorps program, to ensure compliance with the nondisplacement requirements specified in section 177 of the NCSA;
- Will, in the case of an AmeriCorps program that is not funded through a State, consult with and coordinate activities with the State Commission for the state in which the program operates.
- Will ensure that any national service program carried out by the applicant using assistance provided under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and any national service program supported by a grant made by the applicant using such assistance will address unmet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs through services that provide a direct benefit to the community in which the service is performed;
- Will comply with the nonduplication and nondisplacement requirements set out in section 177 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, and in the Corporation's regulations at § 2540.100;
- Will comply with the grievance procedure requirements as set out in section 176(f) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and in the Corporation's regulations at 45 CFR § 2540.230;
- Will provide participants in the national service program with the training, skills, and knowledge necessary for the projects that participants are called upon to perform;
- Will provide support services to participants, such as information regarding G.E.D. attainment and post-service employment, and, if appropriate, opportunities for participants to reflect on their service experiences;
- Will arrange for an independent evaluation of any national service program carried out using assistance provided to the applicant under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 or, with the approval of the Corporation, conduct an internal evaluation of the program;
- Will apply measurable performance goals and evaluation methods, which are to be used as part of such evaluation to determine the program's impact on communities and persons served by the program, on participants who take part in the projects, and in other such areas as required by the Corporation;
- Will ensure the provision of a living allowance and other benefits to participants as required by the Corporation;
- Has not violated a Federal criminal statute;
- If a state applicant, will ensure that the State subgrants will be used to support national service programs selected by the State on a competitive basis;
- If a state applicant, will seek to ensure an equitable allocation within the State of assistance and approved national service positions, taking into consideration such factors as the locations of the programs, population density, and economic distress;
- If a state applicant, will ensure that not less than 60% of the assistance will be used to make grants to support national service programs other than those carried out by a State agency, unless the Corporation approves otherwise.

### **For Learn and Serve America Applicants ONLY**

*If you are not applying for a grant through Learn and Serve America, you may disregard this section.*

- Will keep such records and provide such information to the Corporation with respect to the programs as may be required for fiscal audits and program evaluation.
- Will comply with the nonduplication, nondisplacement, and grievance procedure requirements of 45 CFR Part 2540.

- Will, prior to the placement of a participant, consult with the appropriate local labor organization, if any, representing employees in the area who are engaged in the same or similar work as that proposed to be carried out by the program, to prevent the displacement and protect the rights of those employees.
- Will comply with the 45 CFR 2540.200-207 criminal history check requirements for all individuals receiving a living allowance, stipend, national service educational award, or salary through a program receiving assistance under the national service laws—regardless of the type of service the individual is performing or the individual’s access to vulnerable populations.
- Will comply with the parental involvement requirements 45 CFR 2540.330.
- Will, for school-based grants, make efforts to:
  1. ensure that students of different ages, races, sexes, ethnic groups, disabilities, and economic backgrounds have opportunities to serve together;
  2. include any opportunities for students, enrolled in schools or programs of education providing elementary or secondary education, to participate in service-learning programs and ensure that such service-learning programs include opportunities for such students to serve together;
  3. involve participants in the design and operation of the programs;
  4. promote service-learning in areas of greatest need, including low-income or rural areas; and
  5. otherwise integrate service opportunities into the academic program of the participants.

### **For Social Innovation Fund Applicants ONLY**

*If you are not applying for a Social Innovation Fund grant, you may disregard this section.*

- Will use the funds received through the award in order to make subgrants to community organizations that will use the funds to replicate or expand proven initiatives, or support new initiatives, in low-income communities.
- Will consult with a diverse cross section of community representatives in making decisions about subgrants for communities (including individuals from the public, nonprofit private, and for-profit private sectors).
- Will make subgrants of a sufficient size and scope to enable the community organizations to build their capacity to manage initiatives, and sustain replication or expansion of the initiatives;
- Will not make any subgrants to--
  - the parent organizations of the applicant,
  - a subsidiary organization of the parent organization of the applicant, or,
  - if the applicant applied for a SIF award as a partnership, any member of the partnership.
- Commits to meeting the matching fund requirements of section 198k(i) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12653k(i)).
- Commits to use data and evaluations to improve the applicant’s own model and to improve the initiatives funded by the applicant.
- Commits to cooperate with any evaluation activities undertaken by the Corporation.
- Has adopted and implemented standard of conduct policies and procedures in regard to procurements which meet the requirements of either 45 C.F.R. §2541.360(b)(3), or 2 C.F.R. §215.42 and 45 C.F.R. §2543.42.
- Has adopted and implemented policies and procedures in regard to the applicant’s subgrant competitions which will provide reasonable assurance that conflicts of interest (or appearances of conflicts of interest) on the part of reviewers or decision-makers are identified and appropriately mitigated.

## ***CERTIFICATIONS***

### **Certification – Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

This certification is required by the government-wide regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR Part 180, Section 180.335, *What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with a Federal agency?*

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that neither the applicant nor its principals:

- Is presently excluded or disqualified;
- Has been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it for one of those offenses within that time period;
- Is presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission or any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a); or
- Has had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

### **Certification – Drug Free Workplace**

This certification is required by the Corporation's regulations implementing sections 5150-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690), 45 CFR Part 2545, Subpart B. The regulations require certification by grantees, prior to award, that they will make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The certification set out below is a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the agency determines to award the grant. False certification or violation of the certification may be grounds for suspension of payments, suspension or termination of grants, or government-wide suspension or debarment (see 2 CFR Part 180, Subparts G and H).

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace by:

- A. Publishing a drug-free workplace statement that:
  - a. Notifies employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace;
  - b. Specifies the actions that the grantee will take against employees for violating that prohibition; and
  - c. Informs employees that, as a condition of employment under any award, each employee will abide by the terms of the statement and notify the grantee in writing if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace within five days of the conviction;
- B. Requiring that a copy of the statement described in paragraph (A) be given to each employee who will be engaged in the performance of any Federal award;
- C. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
  - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
  - b. The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
  - c. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
  - d. The penalties that the grantee may impose upon them for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- D. Providing us, as well as any other Federal agency on whose award the convicted employee was working, with written notification within 10 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace;
- E. Taking one of the following actions within 30 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace:
  - a. Taking appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination; or
  - b. Requiring that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for these purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

- F. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (A) through (E).

#### **Certification - Lobbying Activities**

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that:

- No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the applicant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
- If any funds other than federal appropriated 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 federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the applicant will submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- The applicant will require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subcontracts at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients will certify and disclose accordingly.

#### **Certification - Grant Review Process (State Commissions Only)**

I certify that in conducting our review process, we have ensured compliance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990, the Corporation's peer review requirements, and all state laws and conflict of interest rules.

### **For AmeriCorps State and National Applicants ONLY**

*If you are not applying for a grant through AmeriCorps\*State and National, you may ignore this section.*

#### **Erroneous certification or assurance**

The assurances and certifications are material representations of fact upon which we rely in determining whether to enter into this transaction. If we later determine that you knowingly submitted an erroneous certification or assurance, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

#### **Notice of error in certification or assurance**

You must provide immediate written notice to us if at any time you learn that a certification or assurance was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous because of changed circumstances.

#### **Definitions**

The terms "debarment", "suspension", "excluded", "disqualified", "ineligible", "participant", "person", "principal", "proposal", and "voluntarily excluded" as used in this document have the meanings set out in 2 CFR Part 180, subpart I, "Definitions." A transaction shall be considered a "covered transaction" if it meets the definition in 2 CFR part 180 subpart B, "Covered Transactions."

#### **Assurance requirement for subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that if we approve your application you shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by us.

#### **Assurance inclusion in subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that you will obtain an assurance from prospective participants in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions that the participants are not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.

#### **Assurance of subgrant principals**

You may rely upon an assurance of a prospective participant in a lower-tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless you know that the assurance is erroneous. You may decide the method and frequency by which you determine the eligibility of your principals. You may, but are not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.

**Non-assurance in subgrant agreements**

If you knowingly enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

**Prudent person standard**

Nothing contained in the aforementioned may be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the assurances and certifications required. Your knowledge and information is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.