

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

Fiscal Year 2024

State Appraiser Regulatory Agencies Support (SARAS) Grant

All entities wishing to do business with the federal government must have an active unique entity identifier (UEI). The UEI number is issued by the SAM system. Requesting a UEI using SAM.gov can be found at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

Grants.gov registration information can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

On April 4, 2022, the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number was replaced by a new, non-proprietary identifier requested in, and assigned by, the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). This new identifier is the UEI. Additional Information can be found on Grants.gov: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/planned-uei-updates.html>.

I. Program Description

A. Issued by

The Appraisal Subcommittee (ASC) of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC)

B. Assistance Listing Number

38.006

C. Assistance Listing Title

State Appraiser Regulatory Agencies Support (SARAS) Grant

D. Funding Opportunity Title

Fiscal Year 2024 State Appraiser Regulatory Agencies Support (SARAS) Grant Program

E. Authorizing Authority for the Program

12 U.S.C. 3338(b)(5)

F. Announcement Type Initial

Initial

G. Program Overview, Objectives and Priorities

1. Overview

This announcement is making available federal assistance for the State regulatory agencies with the responsibility for (1) credentialing and supervising certified and licensed real estate appraisers eligible to perform appraisals for federally related transactions as defined in Title XI § 1121(4), 12 U.S.C. 3350; and/or (2) registering and supervising appraisal management companies (AMCs) under Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989 as amended (Title XI). According to Title XI § 1109 (b)(5), 12 U.S.C. 3338, grants to the States lists two areas of support: (1) the complaint process, complaint investigations, and appraiser enforcement activities of such agencies; and (2) the submission of data on State certified and licensed appraisers and AMCs to the National Registries, including information affirming that the appraiser or AMC meets the required qualification criteria and formal and informal disciplinary actions.

ASC may also identify additional activities that this funding will support States in complying with their Title XI requirements.

a. Objectives

The funding being made available is meant to aid the States to improve the State real estate appraiser regulatory framework.

b. Priorities

ASC has identified the following priorities for this fiscal year. In addition to the States' being able to submit projects that address their identified gaps in implementing the requirements of Title XI, projects can also be submitted to address any of these set priorities. Submitted project plans should clearly outline how ASC grant funding would address the State's gap as well as support the stated ASC priority. ASC highly encourages that projects also make considerations for advancing equity and diversity as well as possible partnerships with institutions of higher education.

- i. Reducing barriers to entry into the real estate appraiser profession to assure the availability of State certified and licensed appraisers for the performance of appraisals in federally related transactions.

- (1) States with a shortage of appraisers in rural, tribal lands, or other underserved markets may submit projects to assist aspiring appraisers in fulfilling the required education and experience to become a licensed or certified appraiser. The application should include supportable data that

substantiate the shortage of appraisers. Projects that address diversity and partnerships with institutions of higher education are highly encouraged.

(2) States with requirements that go above the minimum requirements set by the Appraiser Qualifications Board (AQB) as identified in the state-level dashboard developed by the Interagency Task Force on Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE) (<https://pave.hud.gov/reducebarriers>) may submit projects for the State to assess, review, and revise their additional requirements.

ii. Improving the State real estate appraiser and AMC complaint and/or enforcement process to assure effective supervision of the activities of State certified and licensed appraisers.

These projects expand the appraiser and AMC complaint process, investigations, and enforcement activities. Examples of this can include:

(1) Improve the complaint intake process for complaints alleging appraisal bias.

(2) Using technology to improve investigatory process of complaints against State certified and licensed appraisers and registered AMCs.

(3) Reduction of complaint backlog or time to resolve complaints.

iii. Improving data submission to the National Registry.

Improvements to the process of submitting data on State certified and licensed appraisers and registered AMCs to the National Registry. Examples of this can include:

(1) Transitioning to the use of Application Programming Interfaces.

(2) Implementing the use of unique identifier (UID) for appraisers.

iv. Staff Development that ensures effective supervision of the activities of State certified and licensed appraisers.

Participation in trainings, meetings, and conferences to increase professional competency in the management and regulation of State appraiser and AMC programs. Proposals must include the name of the training, the vendor/supplier, and dates of the event. The grant Statement of Work (SOW) should include the titles/position of those individuals the State is seeking to fund as well as the benefit to the State for those individuals' participation.

Conference/symposium/and seminar participation is limited to no more than 3 staff and/or board members participating at the same conference/symposium/seminar.

v. Improving the State’s overall process or infrastructure to ensure compliance with Title XI requirements. Examples can include:

(1) Develop remedial education concerning the most common practice violations.

(2) Process requests for temporary practice permits within 5 business days of receipt of a completed application.

H. Performance Measures

Performance metrics for this grant program are as follows:

Performance Measure 1: Improve the State’s capability to maintain compliance with Title XI requirements identified as gaps in the grant application.

Performance Measure 2: Implementation of data modernization processes that increase data efficiencies (if applicable).

ASC will analyze the above metrics through State Compliance Reviews performed by the ASC Policy Managers and review of semi-annual programmatic report submissions by the States.

II. Federal Award Information

A. Available Funding for FY24: \$2,025,000

ASC has approved the FY24 level of funding. Applicants can submit applications in amounts of up to \$120,000 federal share per year for three years (maximum of \$360,000 for three years). Grants will be for three years, with funding provided on an annual basis. The approved FY24 level of funding is only for year 1 of 3 funding.

B. Period of Performance: 36 months

Grants will be for three years, with funding provided on an annual basis. Extensions to the period of performance are allowed. For additional information regarding requesting extension requests, please refer to the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2.

1. Funding Instrument Type: Grant

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicant

State appraiser certifying and licensing agency, as defined in Title XI § 1121(1), 12 U.S.C. 3350, subject to oversight by ASC and with the jurisdiction for (1) credentialing and supervising certified and licensed real estate appraisers eligible to perform appraisals for federally related transactions as defined in Title XI § 1121(4), 12 U.S.C. 3350; and/or (2) registering and supervising AMCs.

B. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

The fifty U.S. States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands (States) are eligible for this grant program.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Key Dates and Times

1. **Application Start Date:** February 1, 2024

2. **Application Submission Deadline:**

First round: June 3, 2024 at 5:00 PM ET

Second round: September 4, 2024 at 5:00 PM ET

Applications **must** be submitted during one of the established deadlines. **ASC will not review applications that are received after the established deadline.** ASC may, however, extend the application deadline on request for any applicant who can demonstrate that good cause exists to justify extending the deadline. Good cause for an extension may include technical problems outside of the applicant's control that prevent submission of the application by the deadline, or other exigent or emergency circumstances.

3. **Anticipated Funding Selection Date:**

First round: no later than July 19, 2024

Second round: no later than September 20, 2024

4. **Anticipated Award Date**

First round: no later than August 15, 2024

Second round: no later than October 15, 2024

5. **Other Key Dates:**

Four weeks before the actual submission of applications the following steps should be completed by the applicant:

- a. Initial registration in SAM.gov, including UEI issuance.
- b. Obtaining a valid Employer Identification Number.
- c. Creating an account with login.gov.

B. Agreeing to Terms and Conditions of Award

By submitting an application, applicants agree to comply with the requirements of this NOFA and the terms and conditions of the award, should they receive an award.

C. Address to Request Application Package

Please send request to Grants@asc.gov or mail to:

Postal Address: The Appraisal Subcommittee
Attn: Grants Management Office
1325 G Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005

D. Requirements

1. Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and Register in System for Award Management (SAM)

Applying for an award under this grant program is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Applicants are encouraged to register early with SAM.gov as the registration process can take four weeks or more to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the applicant's ability to meet required submission deadlines.

Failure of an applicant to comply with any of the required steps before the deadline for submitting an application may disqualify that application from funding.

To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

- a. Apply for, update, or verify their UEI number from SAM.gov and Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service;
- b. In the application, provide an UEI number;
- c. Have an account with login.gov;

- d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application; and
- e. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. As part of this, applicants must also provide information on an applicant's immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

Specific instructions on how to apply for, update, or verify an UEI number or SAM registration are found at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>

Applicants are advised that ASC may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when ASC is ready to make a federal award. Further, as noted above, an applicant's or recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of an active federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, ASC may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Per 2 CFR § 25.110(c)(2)(iii), if an applicant is experiencing exigent circumstances that prevents the applicant from obtaining an UEI number and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a federal award, the applicant must notify ASC as soon as possible by contacting Grants@asc.gov and providing the details of the circumstances that prevent completion of these requirements.

If ASC determines that there are exigent circumstances and ASC has decided to make an award, the applicant will be required to obtain a UEI number, if applicable, and complete the SAM registration within 30 calendar days of the federal award date.

2. How to Submit a grant application to ASC

The following elements comprise the entire application package:

- a. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance (Face Page)
- b. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction
- c. ASC Budget Narrative

- d. SF-424B- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
- e. Disclosure of Lobbying Form (SF-LLL)
- f. Application Narrative/Statement of Work/Work Plan
- g. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) (if applicable)

Please note that all the Standard Forms (SF) can be found on the ASC website at <https://www.asc.gov/grants/state-programs>.

The grant application package must be emailed to Grants@asc.gov. Subject line of the email should indicate “FY24 SARAS Application.”

3. Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs

ASC can only approve projects that support both Title XI requirements and the priorities set forth in this NOFA. Costs should comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit requirements of the 2 CFR Part 200, unless otherwise indicated in this NOFA, the terms and conditions of the award, or the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2.

Federal funds made available through this award may be used for the purpose set forth in this NOFA, the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2, and the terms and conditions of the award and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Award funds may not be used for matching funds for any other federal awards, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity.

- a. In determining if costs are allowable, the costs must be:
 - i. Necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the work covered by the grant program.
 - ii. Authorized or not prohibited under state or local laws or regulations.
 - iii. Consistent with both grant and ASC policies, regulations, and procedures; that applies to both federally funded activities and other activities of the non-federal entity.
 - iv. Treated in conformance with generally acceptable accounting principles.

- v. Not included in the cost of any other federally funded activity.
 - vi. Inclusive of all applicable credits or reductions due to discounts, rebates, recoveries of losses, insurance proceeds, or other overpayments or erroneous charges.
 - vii. Adequately documented.
- b. **List of allowed and unallowed grant activities. This is not an exhaustive list.**
- i. **Allowable Costs**
 - (1) **Conference Fees:** Registration fees for recipient’s employees, consultants, or experts to attend an approved conference or meeting that supports the purpose of the grant program.
 - (2) **Contract Costs:** Costs paid to contracts or contractors to support the grant program. Contracts must abide with both federal and recipient’s procurement policies and procedures.
 - (3) **Equipment:** Personal property that has a value of \$5,000 or greater.
 - (4) **Fringe Benefits:** Supplemental personnel benefit costs outside of salary.
 - (5) **Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs are allowable under this program as described in 2 CFR Part 200, including 2 CFR § 200.414. Applicants with a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement that desire to charge indirect costs to an award must provide a copy of their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement at the time of application. Only those States with a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement can charge indirect costs to the grant.
 - (6) **Personnel Costs:** Employee salary/compensation.
 - (7) **Pre-Award Costs:** Costs incurred before the start of the grant period of performance. In order for these costs to be allowed, they **must be approved by ASC.**
 - (8) **Stipend:** Fixed amount of money paid to trainees, students, and/or interns for their participation in a training program.
 - (9) **Supplies:** Personal property that is valued at less than \$5,000.

(10) **Technology Costs:** Costs involving the use of machines, tools, methods, systems, or procedures to solve problems.

(11) **Training Costs:** Registration fees or tuition costs to take an approved course.

(12) **Travel:** Domestic travel costs are allowable. Applicants must follow their state policies and procedures on travel.

ii. **Unallowable Costs**

(1) **Bad Debts:** debts which have been determined to be uncollectable, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, are unallowable. Related collection costs, and related legal costs, arising from such debts after they have been determined to be uncollectable are also unallowable.

(2) **Construction Costs**

(3) **Clothing**

(4) **Entertainment Costs:** cost of entertainment including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable.

(5) **Fines**

(6) **Legal Costs:** Legal costs incurred in defending or prosecuting claims, whether equitable or monetary, including administrative grant appeals.

(7) **Lobbying Costs**

(8) **Program Income:** Gross income earned by the non-federal entity or recipient that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the federal award during the period of performance.

(9) **Real Property**

(10) **Scholarships**

(11) **Supplanting:** The practice of using federal funding to replace already approved/appropriated state, local, tribal funds for the same activity.

(12) **Unrelated Costs:** Costs that do not support the program or are not approved by ASC.

V. Application Review Information

A. Application Evaluation Criteria

1. Programmatic Criteria

ASC needs to ensure that it is funding sound, well-coordinated projects. Projects that are developed in consultation with the applicant's Contracting, Budget/Finance, Legal, and/or Grants Management Office as appropriate exhibits proper coordination. Projects also need to comply with Title XI and support the State in complying with its requirements. All projects will be evaluated considering this factor.

a. Projects including Practicum Course or PAREA activities.

States with a shortage of appraisers in rural, tribal lands, or other underserved markets may submit projects to assist aspiring appraisers in fulfilling the required education and training to become a licensed or certified appraiser. The application should include verifiable data that substantiate the shortage of appraisers.

If the State can demonstrate this shortage, projects with either a Practicum Course or the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) project can be submitted and considered for funding by ASC. The State must first ensure that their proposed program complies with the requirements established by the AQB. In addition to complying with the requirements of the AQB, the project application must include the following:

- i. **Statement of Need** which includes documented data that clearly demonstrates a shortage of real estate appraisers in rural, tribal lands, or other underserved markets. The applicant must also reference or supply the source of this verifiable data that substantiates the claim.
- ii. **Objectives/Measurable Accomplishments** identify what the program sets to accomplish by the end of the grant's period of performance and include the organizations and/or offices involved and their specific roles and responsibilities in ensuring the success of the State's program.
- iii. **Methodology Plan** must include details of how the program will be executed in order to meet the defined objectives/measurable accomplishments. This should include:

- (1) Milestone activities and schedule that include completion dates.
 - (2) A proposed list of contracts and/or memorandums of understanding (MOU) that will be executed between the State and vendors and/or collaborators. The list should include the legal names of all organization(s)/vendor(s)/collaborator(s).
 - (3) The instructor-to-student ratio.
 - (4) A recruitment and retention plan for participants.
 - (5) If stipends are to be awarded to participants, confirmation that the program will abide with the State's policies and procedures as it pertains to the issuance of stipends. Please note scholarship or direct payments or reimbursements to contractors or organizations is unallowable. Stipends to participants are allowed.
 - (6) Please note that applicants cannot combine elements of a Practicum Course and PAREA. If applicants plan on using PAREA in any capacity, an applicant will need to obtain written approval from the AQB.
- iv. **Evaluation Plan** identifies the process in place that ensures that the State will monitor and track progress in accomplishing the defined established goals and objectives set forth in the program.

2. Financial Integrity Criteria

Prior to making a federal award, federal awarding agencies are required by 31 U.S.C. 3354, as enacted by the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-117 (2020); 41 U.S.C. 2313; and 2 CFR § 200.206 to review information available through any Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-designated repositories of governmentwide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, including whether the applicant is suspended or debarred.

ASC may also pose additional questions to the applicant to aid in conducting the pre-award risk review. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

- a. Financial stability;
- b. Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards;
- c. History of performance in managing federal award;
- d. Reports and findings from audits; and

- e. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

3. Supplemental Financial Integrity and Criteria and Review

N/A

B. Review and Selection Process

Applicants must comply with all the administrative requirements herein including the submission of all the required application materials by the set deadline. The following process will be used to make awards of the ASC SARAS grant program.

1. Initial Review

The ASC Grants Management Office (GMO) staff conducts a completeness review of the submitted application to ensure that the eligible applicant from the State has submitted the grant application and validate that all the required documents and actions have been accomplished in order to review the grant application. If additional information is required or an ineligible applicant has submitted an application, a member of the ASC GMO staff will contact the applicant.

2. Overall Review

Once it has been determined that a complete and eligible application has been submitted, the ASC GMO and subject matter experts (SME) begin the financial review of the application. The financial review includes the following criteria:

- a. Review the proposed budget and budget justification for allowability, allocability, and financial reasonableness.
- b. Validate if the applicant meets the financial and legal requirements listed in 2 CFR Part 200.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

A. Notice of Grant Award

The Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be signed by the ASC Executive Director and emailed to the applicant's authorized representative for signature. Before accepting the award by signing the NGA, the recipient should carefully read the award package. The package will include the NGA, approved budget, and terms and conditions. **The recipient is accepting all conditions in this NOFA and the ASC Grants Handbook Ver 2 as well as any specific terms and conditions in the NGA to receive an award under this program.**

Recipients must sign and return the award package no later than 30 calendar days from the award date. The recipient must also follow the steps in establishing a Payment and Management System (PMS) account as outlined in section 4.4.1 of the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2. Drawing down funds in the PMS also serves as acceptance of all the terms of the award.

B. Administrative and ASC Terms and Conditions

In addition to the requirements in this section of this NOFA and the administrative requirements outlined in the 2 CFR Part 200, ASC may place specific terms and conditions on individual awards in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. These specific terms and conditions will be clearly stated in the award package at the time of the award.

Recipients will also have to comply with the ASC General Terms and Conditions.

C. Reporting

1. Semi-annual Reports

Recipients are required to submit semi-annual financial (SF-425) and programmatic reports (ASC-PR) as a condition of award acceptance. Future awards and funds drawdown may be withheld if these reports are delinquent. Refer to the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2, section 5.1.4 Reporting Requirements for additional information.

Reporting period 04/01 to 09/30 is due 10/30

Reporting period 10/01 to 03/31 is due 04/30

2. Final Reports

Recipients' final reports are due 120 calendar days after the end of the period of performance. Please refer to the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2 for additional information regarding semi-annual and final report requirements.

D. Monitoring and Oversight

Per 2 CFR §§ 200.328-200.329, ASC, through its authorized representatives, has the right at all reasonable times, to make site visits or conduct desk reviews to review grant project accomplishments and management control systems to review award progress and provide any required technical assistance. During these reviews, the ASC GMO staff will review recipients' files related to the award. As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit authorized ASC staff, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-related records and to interview the organization's staff and contractors regarding the program. Recipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner when ASC requests information pertaining to the grant award.

VII. ASC Agency Contact Information

A. Contact and Resource Information

ASC Grants Management Office
Regeane Frederique, ASC Grants Director
Grants@asc.gov

B. Systems Information

1. Payment Management System (PMS)

ASC will use the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) PMS system for both grant reporting and recipient drawdown of grant funds. The One DHHS helpdesk for PMS provides support Monday-Friday, 7am-9pm EST. The helpdesk can be reached by phone 1-877-614-5533, press option 3 or PMSsupport@psc.gov. There is also a Self Help Web Portal available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at <https://pms.psc.gov/support/help-desk.html>.

VIII. Additional Information

A. ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2 serves as a resource for applicants and recipients for ASC grant funding. It serves as a guide on grant policies and procedures for managing ASC grants. The handbook can be found on our website www.asc.gov/grants.

B. Termination Provisions

ASC may terminate a federal award in whole or in part for any of the reasons outlined in 2 CFR § 200.340 Termination.

1. Noncompliance

If a recipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of a federal award, ASC may terminate the award in whole or in part. If the noncompliance can be corrected, ASC may first attempt to direct the recipient to correct the noncompliance. If the noncompliance cannot be corrected or the recipient is nonresponsive, ASC may proceed with a remedy notification, which could impose a remedy based on noncompliance per 2 CFR § 200.339 Remedies for Noncompliance.

C. Period of performance (POP) Extensions

Time extensions to the period of performance are permitted for this program. Extensions will only be considered through a formal written request of the recipient's authorized representative or designee. The extension request should include the following information:

1. The grant program, budget year, and grant award number.
2. The reason for the delay. This may include any details of the legal, policy, or operational challenges that prevent the final outcome of awarded funds by the current deadline.
3. The status of all the activities.
4. The amount of funds expended to date.
5. The remaining available funds of the grant.
6. A budget outlining how remaining grant funds will be expended.
7. A plan for completion, including milestones and timeframes for achieving each milestone and position or person responsible for implementing the plan for completion.
8. Certification that the activities will be completed within the extended period of performance.

D. Grant Closeout

At the end of the period of performance, the recipient will have 120 calendar days to submit the request to closeout letter, the final federal financial report (SF-425) and final progress report (ASC-PR) to the PMS system. Both reports should be marked “final”. The request to closeout letter must be signed by the recipient’s authorized representative. The federal financial report should be cumulative for the entire period of performance. The final progress report should list all the accomplishments of the grant for the entire period of performance. Additional requirements are listed in the ASC Grants Handbook Ver. 2 under Chapter 6.