

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

Federal Agency Name: The Appraisal Subcommittee (ASC)

Funding Opportunity Title: Board Support and Innovation Grant

Announcement Type: Federal, Non-Competitive Grant

Eligible Entities: The Appraisal Foundation (TAF)

Application Deadline: December 15, 2021

Award Period: October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2023 (2 Year Award)

Available Funds: \$2,000,000 over two years; \$1,000,000 in Year 1

Number of Awards: 1

Authorization: Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act (FIRREA), Title XI § 1109 (b)(4), 12 U.S.C. 3338 (Title XI)

BACKGROUND

Title XI's purpose is to "provide that Federal financial and public policy interests in real estate transactions will be protected by requiring that real estate appraisals utilized in connection with federally related transactions are performed in writing, in accordance with uniform standards, and by individuals whose competency has been demonstrated and whose professional conduct will be subject to effective supervision." In general, the ASC oversees the real estate appraisal regulatory framework as it relates to federally related transactions as defined in Title XI.

Title XI also requires the ASC to monitor and review the practices, procedures, activities and organizational structure of the Appraisal Foundation (TAF) and authorizes the ASC to grant funds as it deems appropriate to TAF to support grant-eligible activities of the Appraiser Qualifications and Appraisal Standards Boards (AQB and ASB).

PURPOSE

Make funds available to TAF to support operations of the AQB and ASB, including projects and activities that promote innovation and reform of the AQB and ASB grant-eligible activities.

I. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The ASC invites a proposal from TAF for federal grant support for the following activities:

- A. Support for AQB and ASB Activities. TAF can request up to 50% of the available funds to support grant-eligible AQB/ASB activities in FY 2022. The proposal should reflect COVID-19-related logistical considerations and plan for both in-person or virtual meetings or a combination of the two for the next fiscal year.

- B. USPAP Publishing and Revenue Model.** TAF can request funds to commission an outside study to review the current publishing cycle for USPAP and its connection to TAF's revenue needs. The study should review alternative revenue models and provide estimates for technology and staffing costs to develop cost-effective and sustainable models to support TAF's operations related to the work of the AQB and ASB and the real estate valuation industry overall.
- C. AQB/ASB/Board of Trustees (BOT) Operational Assessment.** TAF can request funds to use outside experts to assess structure, operations and programmatic impact of the Boards' work. The assessment can include analysis and recommendations related to legal support and review of the Boards' work product, general professional board staffing, diversity of the Boards, independence and governance (Board term lengths, recruitment/selection strategies) of the Boards, etc. The funds could also be used to examine the impact to the real property standards by having them intermingled with personal property and business valuation standards which are not regulated professions.
- D. Free USPAP.** Grant funds may be used to provide trainees and credentialed appraisers with a free or reduced cost copy of Standards 1-4 and associated annotations.
- E. Other Initiatives.** TAF can propose additional areas or initiatives for grant support, including, but not limited to addressing:
- appraiser shortages
 - diversity in the profession
 - veterans' outreach
 - National Exam updates

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

- A. Available Funds and Estimated Award Amounts:** The ASC has made available a total of \$2,000,000 for grant-eligible activities conducted by TAF over a two-year grant period with \$1,000,000 available for the first year. The budget for year two will be determined in a subsequent renewal application.
- B. Project Period:** This grant will be for two years with funding provided on an annual basis. The project period will be October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023.
- C. Type of Award:** Under this NOFA the applicant will receive a non-competitive, federal cost-reimbursement grant that will specify the amount awarded based on a budget submitted to and negotiated and approved by the ASC. The grantee will be authorized to spend funds as costs are incurred based on the approved budget during a specified budget period.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants: The only eligible applicant for this NOFA is TAF. The ASC does, however, encourage partnerships that together bring the range of complementary background, activities, experience, knowledge and systems to support the work of TAF and the AQB and ASB. TAF may identify partners in their applications or outline a detailed process for identifying and selecting partners in the application.

IV. APPLICATION, SUBMISSION AND RELATED INFORMATION

This notice should be read together with the Code of Federal Regulations at 2 CFR 200 to understand the priorities for this funding and the requirements for administering federal grant funds. The regulations in 2 CFR 200 can be found at: www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/ECFR?page=browse. They describe grantee requirements for financial management of the federal funds, provide areas and examples of generally allowable costs under the grant and outline the requirements for grantee audits of expenditures.

A. Address to Request Application Package: This NOFA contains all the information applicants need to apply for funds. If you cannot access the required forms from the links provided or need accessible materials provided in an alternate format, you can do so by emailing grants@ASC.gov.

B. List of Required Application Elements: Applicant will submit the elements listed below to the ASC. Some are standard federal grant forms that can be found at: <https://www.asc.gov/Grants.aspx>

- Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form 424: This is a cover page for the Application Narrative
- _ Application Narrative: There is no form for the narrative – See content requirements below in Section D 2 and attach the narrative to the SF424, Application for Federal Assistance.
- _ Budget Form, SF 424A *(use separate budget forms for the AQB, ASB and TAF activities).
- _ Budget Narrative: See instructions below in Section D 4.
- _ Certifications and Assurances: Applicants must comply with these certifications and assurances within their organizations as a condition of the grant. By signing the SF424, the applicant is agreeing to comply with the certifications and assurances.

C. Required Registrations

1. **DUNS and EIN:** All applications must include a DUNS number (soon to be called a UEI) and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com.
2. **SAM:** After obtaining a DUNS number, the applicant must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and maintain an active SAM account throughout the application and review processes. You can find extensive information about and instructions for using SAM at:

<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/loginFAQ.jsf>

TAF must also maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. The ASC recommends that TAF finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline for new or continuation grants. The ASC also provides guidance on registering in SAM that is available on the ASC website at: <https://www.asc.gov/Grants.aspx>

D. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. **Format of the Application Narrative:** TAF will submit a narrative that covers the information described in D 2, Instructions for the Application Narrative. The narrative can be no longer than 24 pages and must be written in a font equal to or larger than 12-point Times New Roman with double spaced lines.

2. Instructions for Application Narrative: The program narrative should contain the sections listed below. The proposal narrative should include separate sections for the ASB, the AQB and the projects that support TAF and its efforts to advance the appraisal regulatory industry as outlined in Section I of this NOFA. In addition, the narrative should describe TAF's organizational capacity to manage and conduct the planned activities, including background and experience of staff that will be involved in the activities.

a. Business Plans: A plan describing the issues prioritized for each Board's review and planned action during the upcoming fiscal year.

Provide the rationale for the priorities and the means by which those priorities will be addressed.

In separate sections of the narrative, describe plans and activities for any optional grant-eligible projects outlined in Section I of this NOFA.

Describe the staff positions TAF will need to plan and conduct activities and the approach to hiring required staff and/or contractors. Although only Year one activities should be proposed, describe how plans will continue in Year two of the grant.

b. Program Objectives: Within each business plan, include specific program objectives and criteria for measuring the success of those objectives. Be clear about how TAF will meet the objectives and evaluate progress and the effectiveness of each Board's work or the work associated with any special initiatives proposed in this application.

c. USPAP Overview: Within each business plan, provide an overview of the most recent changes to USPAP promulgated by the ASB, and the Real Property Appraiser Qualification Criteria (Criteria) established by the AQB, describing what effect those changes have had on appraisers, users of appraisal services or regulators.

3. Instructions for the Budget: The ASC recommends completing the budget narrative first as a spreadsheet, then completing the budget form, SF424A, with the totals for each of the Object Class Categories. The on-line fillable form includes instructions for completing the form. ASC applicants will complete only the following sections and columns:

Section A, Column e and f

Section B, Column 1

Section C, Columns b, c and d as needed

Section E, Columns b, c and d

Section F, Boxes 22 and 23 as needed

TAF should include projected income from the sale of USPAP or other sources of income that are the result of sale of material developed with federal grant funds. Describe the income in Section C on lines 8 through 11 and enter the anticipated amounts in the relevant columns. Submit separate budget forms for each Board and for TAF activities.

4. Instructions for the Budget Narrative: The budget narrative is a spreadsheet that ties your budget to the proposed activities and provides explanations of costs associated with the project. Provide separate narratives for each board. The budget categories listed below are the Object

Class Categories on the SF424A that represent categories of expenditures under the grant. Enter these budget categories on a spreadsheet following these instructions and include the spreadsheet with the application. Refer to Subpart E, 2 CFR 200.400 - 200.475 for some general categories of allowable costs. Submit separate budget narratives for ASB, AQB and TAF activities.

- a. **Personnel:** For each position to be funded with ASC funds, include the position title, the total salary for each person, the percentage of time the person will spend working on activities under the grant and the total amount being requested.

Example: Project Manager at 50% time based on annual salary of \$70,000=\$35,000

- b. **Fringe Benefits:** This can be a percentage of salaries or other methods.

- c. **Travel:** Specify the reason for travel, its cost including, in general, an estimate of transportation, lodging and per diem. Note travel can be budgeted for up to 100% of planned travel though it is likely COVID-19 may still prevent in-person meetings. Unused travel funds can be rolled to the next year's budget or reprogrammed upon request of the grantee and at ASC's discretion.

Example: Conduct training sessions, each trip average of \$1,200 to 20 locations = \$24,000

- d. **Equipment:** Equipment is defined as anything with a unit value over \$5,000. Please be aware that you will need to maintain an inventory of all equipment following requirements described in 2 CFC 200.439.
- e. **Supplies:** Do not list every supply separately. List purchases such as laptops and printers separately. However, general office supplies can be listed as one-line item.
- f. **Contractual:** Describe and list each contract separately. Contracts can be for materials or services. If for services, list the daily rate for each contractor and the anticipated days needed.
- g. **Other:** This category is for anything that does not fit the other six major categories.
- h. **Total Direct Charges.**
- i. **Indirect Charges:** TAF may use its Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate. Note that provisional rates must be made final and rates must be renewed annually.

- 5. **Instructions for the Certifications and Assurances:** Read the certification and assurances and be prepared to implement them. By signing the SF424, Application for Federal Assistance, the applicant is agreeing to comply with them.

E. Address to Request Additional Information. If you have questions while you are preparing your proposal, you may email the ASC's Grants Director, Mark Abbott at *Mark@ASC.gov*.

The ASC will hold technical assistance calls as requested by TAF to support development of its application.

F. Submission Date and Time: The application is due by 5:00 pm EDT on December 15, 2020.

G. Intergovernmental Review: Not applicable for this grant competition.

H. Funding Requirements and Restrictions:

- _If an application is approved for a grant, TAF may not begin incurring costs until the ASC issues the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The ASC will, however, allow the project period for the grant to begin on October 1, 2021 and allow TAF to seek reimbursement for eligible costs from that date forward.
- _ASC grants on for non-construction purposes. Grantees may not buy or improve property under the grant.
- _Applicable Federal Regulations: All grantees must follow federal requirements for grants contained in 2 CFR 200 and agree to specific certifications and assurances found at <https://www.asc.gov/Grants.aspx>. All staff must understand and follow those requirements. Those regulations also reference other federal requirements that apply to the grants. The NGA will reference these regulations, including requirements for a drug-free workplace and prohibitions on lobbying.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION INFORMATION

The ASC will review TAF’s application based on the criteria listed below to ensure activities are within the scope of the NOFA and confirm the budget includes only costs that are reasonable, allocable and allowable under the grant.

A. Review Criteria and Process: ASC staff will review the application and evaluate it based on these criteria. Because this is not a competitive application, ASC staff will not score the application, but will provide feedback during the negotiation and clarification phase of the grant award process, which is prior to the grant being awarded.

- 1. Organization Capacity:** The extent to which the narrative demonstrates TAF’s capacity to oversee, monitor and support the AQB and ASB in addition to any other proposed activity. Capacity includes ability to provide facilities, equipment, and other resources to ensure both financial and programmatic quality and compliance and accountability with rules and regulations.
- 2. Proposed Plans:** The quality of the business plans to address identified priorities and related objectives, including plans for staffing. The narrative should include plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and ensure high-quality products and services.
- 3. Budget and Cost Effectiveness:** The extent to which the budget narrative aligns with the program design and demonstrates an understanding of what is needed to meet the project objectives.

B. Clarification and Negotiation Process: After the review process, the ASC will work with TAF to clarify any issues and negotiate and approve a final budget and the scope of the activities.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

The ASC will make the award following the review and any clarification or negotiation process. The NGA is the official grant document that contains the amount of the award, the project and budget periods

during which the funds can be spent, any special conditions on the award, the reporting requirements and the grant administration requirements, including specific terms and conditions and certifications. The approved application and budget are part of the NGA. The NGA must be signed by an authorized official at TAF, acknowledging that as the grantee, it will comply with all Terms and Conditions in the NGA and the Certifications and Assurances that come with the award.

The ASC will provide instructions for TAF to set up accounts in the Payment Management System (PMS), operated by the Program Support Center (PSC) in the Department of Health and Human Services. PMS is a secure online system TAF will use to access grant funds and submit financial and progress reports. When the ASC awards a grant, the funds will be placed in a grantee account in PMS, which the grantee will then use to draw down grant funds as they expend them.

TAF will establish an account in the system and enter its bank account and routing data so the ASC can make grant funds available in PMS. As TAF expends funds under the grant, TAF staff will request drawdowns from the PMS account that will be deposited in their bank accounts, usually within 24 hours. Grantees will also submit the Federal Financial Report (FFR) and performance reports in the system which will be due every six months, 30 days after the end of reporting periods that will end on September 30 and March 31 of each grant year.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements: The award under this notice is subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Award in 2 CFR Part 200. In addition, TAF must adhere to requirements in the Terms and Conditions that will accompany the NGA, including Trafficking in Persons, Drug-free Workplace Whistleblower protection and Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting.

VII. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Grantee Partnerships: TAF is encouraged to name cooperating partners in its application but named partners aren't required for the application. In lieu of this, TAF can propose a process for finding a quality partner for a specific project or initiative supported by the grant.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACT and TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS

You may email Mark Abbott at Mark@ASC.gov with any questions related to this NOFA or development of your application.