

# NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

**Federal Agency Name:** The Appraisal Subcommittee

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Training and Technical Assistance for State Appraiser and AMC  
Regulatory Agencies

**Announcement Type:** Competitive Federal Cooperative Agreement

**Eligible Entities:** Non-profit and For-profit Organizations

**CFDA Number:** 38.008

**Award Period:** Three years

**Available Funds:** Year 1 - \$350,000; Three-year Total – up to \$1,050,000

**Number of Awards:** 1

**Application Deadline:** 8:00 PM Eastern Time on November 18, 2020

## I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This announcement and awards under this program are authorized under Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act (FIRREA), Title XI § 1109 (b)(5), 12 U.S.C. 3338. Provisions under this title allow the Appraisal Subcommittee (ASC) to award grants to improve State appraisal regulatory processes and advance the appraisal industry with high-quality, impact-oriented programming.

**A. Background.** Title XI requires the ASC to provide federal oversight of State appraiser and appraisal management company (AMC) regulatory programs, and a monitoring and review framework for the Appraisal Foundation and the Federal Financial Institutions Regulatory Agencies in their roles to protect federal financial and public policy interests in real estate appraisals utilized in federally related transactions.

Title XI also requires the ASC to make grants to the State appraiser certifying and licensing agencies (States) to support States' efforts to comply with Title XI. Prior to the launch of the ASC's \$10 Million, three-year State grant initiative in 2020, the ASC's State grantmaking was focused on providing annual grant funding for the State Investigator Training Program (Levels 1, 2 and 3) through the Appraisal Foundation (TAF). These courses have been in existence for over 10 years and are widely viewed by State agencies as effective, quality training.

The expanded ASC State grant program will provide additional resources to the 55 States and U.S. Territories to support State efforts to effectively meet Title XI standards. States can use the grant funds for participation in trainings and conferences to increase professional competency in the management and regulation of Appraiser and AMC Programs, improvements/expansion of the appraiser and AMC complaint processes, investigations, and enforcement activities and expansion, and other initiatives related to technology and expansion of credentialing services in underserved markets.

**B. Purpose of the Program.** This competition will select a partner to work with the ASC to support the continued development and administration of training for State appraiser and AMC regulatory programs as well as provide an expanded selection of high-quality training and technical assistance opportunities on different topics to be identified through a needs assessment process. The training opportunities will be accessed by States at their discretion using the grant funds provided by the ASC under its State grant program.

The ASC envisions this as an initial three-year effort with the first year's activities identified and subsequent years' activities planned and developed based on research and assessments conducted in collaboration with the ASC during year one. The identified partner will be tasked by the ASC to conduct research to support development of new training curricula as well as new direct technical assistance to support States' efforts in meeting Title XI requirements as effectively, efficiently and consistently as possible across all 55 states/territories.

**C. Funded Activities.** The successful applicant (grantee) will employ a full-time project coordinator, contract personnel and support from third-party partners as needed to carry out the activities proposed in response to this notice. Budgets and activities for years two and three of the initiative will also include a full-time coordinator with additional personnel and program support as needed to carry out the activities co-developed with the ASC prior to the beginning of each program year. Additional funds may be made available in years two and three of the award to support curriculum and other initiatives developed in year one. Areas of activities that will be supported under this initiative include, but are not limited to:

1. **Research.** Conduct needs assessment to determine State Appraiser and AMC regulatory program needs for education of licensing staff, administrators, board members and legal staff covering areas such as Statutes, Regulations, Policies and Procedures, Real Property Appraiser Qualification Criteria, Education Course Review, National Registry, and Enforcement. Research, such as demographic studies on the need for additional appraisers or causes of appraiser shortages.
2. **Curriculum Development.** Grantee must name or provide a process for identifying both subject matter experts (SMEs) to advise on curriculum development and professional curriculum writers with expertise in adult education and delivery of training both in-person and remotely. The applicant should also budget for development of high-quality course material that can be accessed electronically and is compliant with ADA Section 508 accessibility requirements.
3. **Training Delivery and Administration.** Grantee will be asked to develop and deliver a suite of courses for State appraiser and AMC regulatory programs for both remote or in-person training, depending upon States' ability to travel and convene in the upcoming year. Training administration must include plans and a budget for a technology solution to manage the catalog of courses offered, registration and tracking of trainees, payment for courses, testing, certificates of completion, etc. The ASC encourages the use of education software available via cloud subscription to meet this requirement.
4. **Evaluation.** Develop evaluation plans for all curricula and other forms of technical assistance with a focus on measuring effectiveness and impact of the curriculum being delivered. Evaluation plans will be developed in close partnership with the ASC and may

include a third-party evaluation firm or university department with expertise in this area as a partner in the application, or to be identified later.

5. Targeted Technical Assistance. In years two and three of this initiative, the ASC will ask the grantee to develop and implement State-specific technical assistance to provide assistance in such areas as new employee orientation and training and addressing areas of concern or non-compliance. This assistance could be delivered by either a peer-to-peer training network or a small panel of on-call practitioners managed by the grantee. The Year 1 application should include a proposed plan with a detailed methodology/approach and timeline for developing this type of technical assistance in the Year 2 budget narrative submission.
6. Grant Fund Administration. The Cooperator will support States that want to access training and technical assistance opportunities offered through this NOFA, but that have not yet applied directly to the ASC for a State Support Grant. States will be allowed to seek reimbursement for training and other eligible activities from the ASC's Cooperator. Funds will be added to this cooperative agreement over and above the initial \$1,050,000 allocated for the three years of the award to support States.

**D. First Year Activities.** During the first year of the cooperative agreement, the ASC expects activities to include, but are not limited to the following:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the State Appraiser and AMC Regulatory Agencies.
- Propose a suite of courses to be developed and delivered during the three-year period of the grant that will serve to educate State appraiser and AMC program personnel/contractors in such areas as effective administration and supervision of appraisers and AMCs as well as specific Title XI requirements.
- Courses and training modules should focus on Title XI requirements that State appraiser and AMC programs:
  - (1) have policies, practices, funding, staffing, and procedures that are consistent with Title XI;
  - (2) process and resolve complaints in a timely manner; and
  - (3) administer discipline of appraisers and AMCs in an effective, consistent and equitable manner.
- Courses should include real world case studies as appropriate.
- Hire curriculum developers with the background and experience to develop both in-person and remote training courses (synchronous) and individualized, self-paced, on-line trainings (non-synchronous).
- Establish a plan and processes for evaluating the effectiveness of the training.
- Establish and administer a grant fund for States that have not applied directly to the ASC for a Support grant to reimburse them for training and other eligible activities.

## II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

- A. Available Funds and Estimated Award Amounts:** The ASC has a total of \$1,050,000 for this program over a three-year grant period with \$350,000 available for the first year. The ASC anticipates awarding one grant under this NOFA.
- B. Project Period:** This cooperative agreement will be for three years with funding provided on an annual basis. The project period will be October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2023.
- C. Type of Award:** Under this NOFA the applicant will receive a cost-reimbursement cooperative agreement that will specify the amount awarded based on a budget submitted to and negotiated and approved by the ASC. Under a cooperative agreement, the ASC will work closely with the selected applicant in specified areas through processes agreed to cover the course of the program. The grantee will be authorized to spend funds as costs are incurred based on the approved budget during a specified budget period. The ASC may add additional funds during a given grant year if needs assessments and research identify specific tasks, initiatives or needs over and above the initial award.

## III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

**Eligible Applicants:** Non-profit and for-profit organizations with either experience and background in training and curriculum development and or significant experience working with State appraiser regulatory agencies are encouraged to apply or partner with an applicant for this NOFA. The ASC particularly encourages partnerships that together bring the range of complementary background, activities, experience, knowledge and systems to develop and conduct high quality training and technical assistance programs. Applicants may identify partners in their applications or outline a detailed process for identifying and selecting partners in the first year of the award.

## 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: <https://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 at the addresses below:

Postal Address: The Appraisal Subcommittee  
Attn: Mark Abbott  
1325 G Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005

Email Address: [grants@ASC.gov](mailto: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
- 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

### 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](http://www.dnb.com).
2. **SAM:** After obtaining a DUNS number, applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. You can find extensive information about and instructions for using SAM at:

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

If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must also maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. The ASC recommends that applicants finalize 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:** Applicants will submit a narrative that covers the information described in D 2, Instructions for the Application Narrative. The narrative can be no longer than 10 pages and must be written in a font equal to or larger than 12-point Times New Roman.
2. **Instructions for Application Narrative:** Your program narrative should contain the sections listed below and need not be more than a few, but never more than 10 pages.
  - **Needs/Problem Statement:** Explain the needs or issues you plan to address with ASC funding. Describe how you will assess the needs of States for training and technical assistance.

- **Proposed Plan:** List the objectives for your program and explain how your proposed approach will meet the needs you have described and advance the appraiser regulatory field. Describe your plans and activities for the activities the ASC has prioritized for the first year. Describe the staff positions you will need to plan and conduct activities and your approach to hiring required staff and or contractors. Be clear about how you will meet the objectives and evaluate your progress and the effectiveness of the training. Describe how your plans from year one can build to encompass the six areas of funded activities the ASC outlined in Section I.
  - **Organizational Capacity:** Describe your organization’s background and expertise in meeting the needs you want to address and your expertise in curriculum development and providing training and technical assistance to adult learners. Describe your domain expertise or access to expertise through a partner as it relates to State appraiser regulatory agencies. Be clear about staff or advisory panel expertise and prior activities that demonstrate you have the capacity to develop a high-quality program that will benefit the field overall. Describe any partnerships you plan that will be involved in the program. What are their roles and areas of expertise? Include any plans to address possible perceived weaknesses in your organizational capacity through planned staff hires or organizational partnerships.
3. **Instructions for the Budget:** The ASC recommends you prepare your budget narrative first as a spreadsheet, then complete 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

\*There is no required grantee share for this initiative. However, applicant budgets should include projected income from course registration fees offered in Year 1 of the grant. For example, if the applicant anticipates 50 participants paying \$300 to attend a course(s) the non-federal budget column should reflect \$15,000 in matching funds for that line item. In addition, describe the income in Section C on lines 8 through 11 and enter the anticipated amounts in the relevant columns.

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. 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 your application. Refer to Subpart E, 2 CFR 200.400 - 200.475 for some general categories of allowable costs.
- a. **Personnel.** For each position you plan to fund 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

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 CFR 200.439.
- e. Supplies. Do not list every supply separately. You should list purchases such as laptops and printers separately. However, general office supplies can be listed as one-line items.
- 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. Applicants that want to claim indirect costs on the grant must have a negotiated indirect cost rate with the federal government. If your organization has never had a negotiated indirect cost rate, you can claim a de-minimus 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) without going through the process of negotiating a rate. See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for additional information. The ten percent should be calculated by multiplying the MTDC which are salaries including fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services and travel, and up to the first \$5,000 of each subaward (MTDC excludes equipment and capital expenditures) by .1 (10%). Add that 10% to the direct costs to get the total requested amount. For example, if the MTDC grant request without the indirect costs is \$24,300, the amount of the indirect rate would be  $\$24,300 \times .10$  or \$2,430. The total budget for the application would be  $\$24,300 + \$2,430 = \$26,730$ . If you choose to secure a rate, you will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to your cognizant federal agency (the agency that provides your organization with grants or other federal assistance). Until you have a negotiated rate, you may use an initial provisional rate of 10% in your budget which the ASC will adjust when a negotiated rate is in place.

5. **Instructions for the Certifications and Assurances.** Applicants must read and understand the certification and assurances and implement them within their agencies. 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](mailto:Mark@ASC.gov).

The ASC has scheduled technical assistance calls at the days and times in Section VIII below to answer questions about the application process.

**F. Submission Dates and Times.** Applications are due by 8:00 pm EDT on November 18, 2020.

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

#### **H. Funding Requirements and Restrictions**

- If an application is approved for a grant, the organization may not begin incurring costs until the ASC issues the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). In some circumstances, if approved by the ASC, grantees may incur costs before the budget period start date on the NGA. However, these pre-award costs must be approved in advance by the ASC.
- 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 the applications 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. The ASC may need to adjust the scope of the planned activities and the budget to meet limitations that may apply. During the review process, ASC staff would work with applicants to review narratives and budgets to adjust the scope of the program and revise the budget.

**A. Review Criteria and Process:** ASC program managers and grants staff will review each application and evaluate them based on these criteria.

1. **Organization Capacity.** The extent to which the narrative demonstrates the applicant's experience working with State regulatory bodies and understanding of needs of States; experience developing and delivering quality training to the target population, organization's capacity to oversee and monitor the program, including to provide facilities, equipment, and other resources in support of the program and the organization's capacity to ensure both financial and programmatic compliance and accountability with rules and regulations. **25 points.**



2. **Needs/Problem Statement.** The extent to which the application articulates current challenges facing the appraiser regulatory field as well as plans for additional discovery/research to identify both existing and future issues that could require robust training and technical assistance through this initiative. **20 points.**
  
3. **Proposed Plan.** The quality of the initial plan to address identified challenges and objectives, including plans for staffing, course development and administration, processes for working closely with ASC in development of this initiative, use of program evaluation and research to develop new training topics/curricula. The narrative should include plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and ensure high-quality products and services. **40 points.**
  
4. **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. The cost effectiveness of proposed solutions including anticipated revenue from course offerings paid by State grant funds. **15 points.**

**B. Clarification and Negotiation Process:** After the review process, the ASC will work with applicants 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 awards following the review and any clarification or negotiation process. The incumbent may not begin grant activities until they receive a formal NGA.

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 NGA must be signed by an authorized official of the grantee, acknowledging that the grantee agrees to 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 grantees 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 that grantees 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 grantees will then use to draw down grant funds as they expend them.

Grantees will establish an account in the system and enter their bank account and routing data so the ASC can make grant funds available in PMS. As grantees expend funds under the grant, they will request drawdowns from their 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.** All awards under this notice are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Award in 2 CFR Part 200. In addition, grantees 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**

**Use of Materials.** Material developed with federal grant funds is for public benefit and while the ASC may allow the grantee to collect and use program income through the grant for the sale of material developed, the ASC will retain a royalty free, perpetual, world-wide license to use all material developed under the auspices of this initiative to continue training and supporting all relevant parties and to authorize others to do so. (*See* 2 CFR 200.315.)

**ASC Partnerships.** The ASC may partner with and use education and research facilities associated with other federal agencies. If the ASC enters into an Interagency Agreement (IAA) for prescribed services, the costs of those services will be in addition to funds supplied to the grantee.

**Grantee Partnerships.** Applicants are encouraged to name cooperating partners in their application (e.g. an organization with deep experience writing adult-based curriculum, or an organization with deep expertise as it relates to a specific area of your application) but named partners aren't required for the application. In lieu of this an applicant can propose a process for finding a quality partner.

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

The ASC will schedule a series of technical assistance calls and webinars to answer questions about the application process and requirements for managing federal grants. Topics are below. In addition, you may email Mark Abbott at [Mark@ASC.gov](mailto:Mark@ASC.gov).

### **A. Questions about the Application Process and Allowable Activities**

See ASC Website for dates and times at <https://www.asc.gov/Grants.aspx>

### **B. Basics of Managing a Federal Grant**

See ASC Website for dates and times at <https://www.asc.gov/Grants.aspx>