UNIFORM NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

NOFO Overview
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Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- ❖ Official public notice of a grant opportunity offered by a state agency

- ❖ Associated with the funding record in the Catalog of State Financial Assistance (CSFA)

- ❖ Informs potential applicants so an educated decision can be made to apply for funding

- ❖ Prepared by the state agency and made publicly available through the agency protocol

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

❖ Structured to comply with 2 CFR 200.203, and Appendix 1

❖ <u>Required</u> as a public notice for all competitive grants and cooperative agreements

❖ Must be posted in accordance with uniform requirements and specific grant requirements
- For competitive grants, must be published at least 45 calendar days
- Should be posted at least 30 calendar days

Uniform NOFO Template

❖ Summary Information

❖ Agency-specific content including:
- Program description
- Funding Information
- Eligibility Information
- Application and Submission Information
- Application Review Information
- Award Administration Information
- State Awarding Agency Contacts
- Other Information

❖ Links to mandatory forms (Uniform Application)

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Summary Information

❖ General information about the funding opportunity including:
  - Awarding agency name; contact information
  - CSFA and CFDA information
  - Source of funding
  - Indication if cost sharing or matching is requirements and if indirect costs are allowed
  - Closing date for applications
  - Details about a Technical Assistance session, if applicable

NOFO Agency-specific Content

Narrative that details the grant program / project

A. Program Description

B. Funding Information

C. Eligibility Information

D. Application and Submission Information

E. Application Review Information

F. Award Administration Information

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

H. Other Information, if applicable

A. Program Description

❖ Must include a full program description including purpose and program objectives

❖ Must describe how this grant supports the awarding agency's funding priorities

❖ Must include citations for authorizing statutes and regulations

❖ Must specify performance goals, indicators or milestones and timing of expected performance

- ▪ Must require the grantee to relate financial data to performance accomplishments

B. Funding Information

- ❖ Must specify the source of funds (e.g., federal or state)
- ❖ Must indicate that a grant will be awarded to successful applicants
- ❖ Must instruct the applicant to submit a project plan for executing the grant award – ensure program delivery is well thought out
- ❖ May elaborate on available funding:
  - ▪ Total amount of funding expected to be awarded
  - ▪ Anticipated number of awards
  - ▪ Anticipated start dates and periods of performance

C. Eligibility Information

- ❖ Specify considerations or factors to determine applicant or application eligibility
    - ▪ Include references to documentation that must be submitted to support eligibility determination, if applicable
    - ▪ Agencies should seek cultural inclusion among grantees
- ❖ Must state if cost sharing, matching or cost participation is required
- ❖ Must state if indirect cost rates are allowed and if there are restrictions
- ❖ Specify "other eligibility criteria"(if applicable) including a reference to the regulation of requirement

An entity must complete pre-qualification through the Grantee Portal before a grant can be awarded

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D. Application and Submission Information

- ❖ Must include instructions for obtaining the grant application and supporting materials (linked to the NOFO)
- ❖ Must specify required content of the application and the and forms/formats the applicant must submit including:
  - Limitations on number of pages, font size, etc.
  - Number of copies required, sequence / assembly details
  - Original signature requirements
- ❖ Must specify information successful applicants must submit after notification of intent and before grant award
- ❖ Must require applicants to provide a DUNS number and a SAM Cage Code (pre-qualification requirements)

D. Application and Submission Information (Continued)

❖ Must identify due dates and times for all submissions
  ▪ Specify date and local time; account for weekends, federal or state holidays
  ▪ What the deadline means (receipt of application, post mark, etc.)
  ▪ Specify how the agency determines if deadlines have been met
  ▪ Note the effect of missing the deadline

❖ If applicable, state that the funding opportunity is open with no specific due dates for applications

❖ May indicate if an acknowledgement of receipt will be distributed by the agency

❖ Must include funding restrictions so applicants develop applications and budgets consistent with the program

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D. Application and Submission Information
(Continued)

❖ Must state if the funding opportunity is subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

❖ Must include funding restrictions so applicants develop applications and budgets consistent with program requirements

  ▪ Specify limitations on direct and indirect costs, pre-award costs

❖ Must address other submission requirements including format for submission (e.g., paper <u>or</u> electronic; <u>only one format</u>)

❖ Provide instructions for submitting applications and point of contact if applicant experiences technical difficulties

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E. Application Review Information

❖ Must specify criteria to evaluate applications including merit and other review criteria, and statutory, regulatory or other preferences applied in the evaluation process

- Specify relative percentages, weights, or other means to distinguish criteria
- Provide detailed explanation for statutory, regulatory or other preferences with explicit indication of their effect (e.g., additional points)

❖ Must specify how cost sharing will be considered in the review process, if applicable

- Clarify restrictions on types of cost acceptable as cost sharing

E. Application Review Information (Continued)

❖ Must list Merit Based Review policy and other program policy or factors used in selecting applicants (e.g., geographic dispersion)

❖ Must specify if there is a multi-phase review process; may describe the phases

❖ Appeal process must be specified pursuant to the Merit Based Review Policy

❖ Agency may disclose the anticipated dates for announcing or notifying applicants of award decision(s)

F. Award Administration Information

❖ Addresses what a successful applicant can expect to receive following selection

- Emphasize that a notice provided prior to a state award is not authorization to begin performance

❖ Must identify the usual administrative requirements of the agency including parameters for indirect cost rates

❖ Introduces the <u>Notice of State Award</u> which specifies usual administrative requirements of the agency and "special / general" terms and conditions for the funding opportunity

❖ Must include type, frequency and means of post-award reporting requirements

G. State Awarding Agency Contacts

❖ Must provide agency point(s) of contact while the funding opportunity is open

▪ Specify multiple ways to reach the contact (e.g., email, phone)

▪ Ensure multiple people can access the email account or phone line

❖ As appropriate, identify different contacts for distinct kinds of help (e.g., administrative, programmatic)

H. Other Information, if Applicable

❖ May include additional information that will assist potential applicant such as:

- Indicate if this a new or one-time initiative
- List related programs or other upcoming agency funding for similar opportunities
- Provide internet addresses for the agency for reference

❖ May alert applicants to the need to identify proprietary information and inform of how the agency handles such information

Mandatory Forms

Links from the NOFO are provided to:

- ❖ Uniform State Application
  - ▪ Including agency-specific forms and application requirements
  - ▪ Project narrative
- ❖ Completed budget and budget narrative

Notice of Funding Opportunity

❖ Agencies may begin using the NOFO template

❖ Or, agencies may conduct a gap analysis to determine the differences between the NOFO and the document currently used

❖ To be compliant, make sure your agency's public notice of grant opportunities includes all required fields from the NOFO

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Questions

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Thank You!

For further information contact the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Unit (GATU) at GOMB

OMB.GATA@illinois.gov