



2021-2022
PUBLIC SERVICE AGENCIES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

GENERAL INFORMATION

If we are representing two organizations, is it okay to only attend one of the Pre-Proposal conferences?

Yes, attendance is required only once. Make sure to identify the organizations represented and include the information in the Pre-Application Questionnaire.

What are the three grants available for funding?

The three grants available for funding are:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): *Community development activities, Construction of public facilities and improvements, Public Services, Preservation and restoration of historic properties in low income neighborhoods*

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG): *Homelessness Prevention, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing*

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA): *Housing assistance and supportive services for low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS*

Can these funds be used for an existing program or does it need to be for a new program?

Funds can be used for an existing program and/or a new program.

How many applications for the CDBG do you typically receive annually?

Over the last three years, approximately thirty (30) applications have been received annually for CDBG funding.

Due to the pandemic and now that vaccinations are slowly coming out, can programs be both onsite and/or virtual for 2021-2022?

The program delivery method to be used is determined by the agency. There are no restrictions at this time to offering programs onsite and/or virtually. The application should clearly explain which programs/services will be provided and in which manner.

COMMUNICATIONS

How do we stay up to date on information sessions for next year? Is there an email list?

Attending the Pre-Proposal Conference adds your name and email to our distribution list for all future communications. Additional updates can be obtained by signing up for Communication Updates on the City's website at www.fortworthtexas.gov as well as registering with NextDoor at www.nextdoor.com

Will the Powerpoint presentation be sent out?

Yes, it will be emailed to attendees as well as posted on the NSD website.

Will the recording be posted?

No. The Pre-Proposal Conference was not recorded.

NEIGHBORLY SOFTWARE

In Neighborly, is there an organization profile that users need to be added to, or should each staff member create a separate account?

The primary contact person should set up the organization account; additional users can be added to the application by the primary contact person.

My agency fits into the ESG category. Does this mean that we will need to leave the CDBG category blank on the application?

Yes. Only one funding category should be selected per application.

When we start a new application, are we able to edit the name?

Yes. The name can be changed as needed.

For additional addresses, do you want to know only sites that are in Fort Worth or do you want to know any sites outside of the city as well?

All addresses where program services will be provided with proposed grant funding should be included in the application.

On the Pre-Application questionnaire, for Question #13, do we only put information on youth programs, which we are applying for, or include information on the additional programs offered to the community as well?

Information may include both, depending on the relevancy to the application. However, primary focus should be given to the programs/services for which the agency is applying. Additional programs offered may be able to demonstrate community need and organizational capacity.

Are two Pre-Application questionnaires required if apply for two grants or just one Pre-Application questionnaire overall?

Yes, a separate Pre-Application questionnaire is required for each application to be submitted.

Item #18 on the Pre-Application questionnaire asks to list past examples of state and federal funding experience (one line for each grant). We have multiple years of working with state and federal funding. How do we reflect that?

Funding awards can be grouped together for multiple years (i.e., City of Fort Worth, 2005-2020); it is recommended to list at least the last ten years' of awards.

How do you download the Section 504 Questionnaire?

Click on the blue title to download the form; complete and upload the form in the area shown.

Are bank statements required or only when requested?

Bank statements are required as a part of the application process. The Pre-Application questionnaire asks if the bank statements are available and the application requests them to be uploaded.

On C1 – Board Composition, under "Filled or Vacant" field are you asking what role the person is currently holding (i.e. Member-at-Large or Board Chair)?

Filled or vacant refers to whether or not there are any vacancies on the current Board, based on the number of available positions. For example, if the Board consists of five members and two are vacant, information for the three filled position would be included and two lines listing vacant positions would be included to document the status of all five available positions. The Board position is not required as a part of the application.

Does the software allow you to submit a partial application or do you have to submit it all at once?

The PSA RFP application may be saved and completed throughout the process; it does not need to be completed all at one time.

For Board agenda/minutes, is this information needed for one meeting or more?

Board agendas covering one calendar year (January 2020 – December 2020) of meetings is sufficient; the number should be based on the frequency of meetings. For example, if the Board met twelve times, then twelve agendas should be included; if the Board met quarterly (four times), then four should be included.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT

Does the PPP loan count as a federal/state grant fund?

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. While this may support fiscal capacity, for the purposes of the 2021-2022 PSA RFP application, the PPP loan would not be considered as a federal/state grant. The eligibility, performance, and reporting requirements are different for loans than grants. The grants management review is to determine the organization's capacity to comply with ongoing compliance and reporting requirements generally associated with grants.

If our agency has received Small Business Administration funding, would that qualify it for having received and managed grant funds?

See response above.

CONSOLIDATED PLAN GOALS

Is early childhood education considered Children/Youth Training & Mentorship?

Yes. Any activities serving children ages up to 18 would be eligible under the Children/Youth Training & Mentorship goal.

If we are working on providing food and other essentials for the poor families through our food pantry, can we apply for any of these programs?

Depending on the program services provided, this may be eligible under Community Development Block Grant Poverty Reduction and Household Stabilization goal. This would require that all persons served be documented and reported as well as income eligibility and services provided.

Is feeding children/youth/teens permissible under the age of 18 years old? Would this be eligible under the Children/Youth training and mentoring goal?

This could be an eligible activity under the Children/Youth training and mentoring goal. However, it would have to be an activity supporting a mentoring, education, or other type of youth programming. All participants served would have to be documented and the information provided as a part of the agency's monthly performance report.

SCORING/FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Do the points directly correlate to the amount awarded?

No. The points are an assessment of the overall application and are used as a guide to determine agencies to be recommended for funding. Award amounts are based on funding availability, request amounts, number of application in each category, and application scores.

Are agencies serving only the Fort Worth area given preference?

No. Agencies must be able to demonstrate fiscal capacity, organizational capacity, grants management capability, and the ability to provide the programs/services. This includes services provided to persons in Fort Worth and outside of the city limits.

Is priority given to organizations showing a budget deficit or is funding open to organizations that would like to expand their services to more clients?

Funding is not determined based on budget deficit. However, fiscal capacity is one of the evaluation factors for the application and budget deficits, along with leveraged funds/resources will be considered in assessing fiscal capacity of the organization. Funding is open to new programs as well as programs wishing to expand their services to more clients.

Our organization is a Christian ministry that helps reduce homelessness. In the past, we have not been able to qualify for certain grants because of our religious nature. Will this be a problem for us?

Being a Christian ministry is not a disqualifying factor for the 2021-2022 PSA RFP. However, as a part of the contract and compliance requirements, there are certain guidelines that may be maintained for funding. Primarily, each beneficiary will be required to be provided the information outlined below, which is Exhibit K – Notice of Beneficiary Rights in the contract, which states the following:

Because this program is supported in whole or in part by direct Federal financial assistance from the Federal Government, we are required to let you know that:

- We may not discriminate against you on the basis of religion, religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice;*
- We may not require you to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities that are offered by us and any participation by you in these activities must be purely voluntary;*
- We must separate, in time or location, any privately funded explicitly religious activities from activities supported by direct Federal financial assistance;*
- If you object to the religious character of our organization, we must make reasonable efforts to identify and refer you to an alternative provider to which you have no such objection; and*
- You may report an organization's violations of these protections, including any denial of services or benefits, by contacting or filing a written complaint to HUD [or the intermediary, if applicable].*

We must give you this written notice before you enroll in our program or activity, as required by 24 CFR 5.109.

How many individuals will be evaluating the CDBG program?

There will be no more than two individuals evaluating each application; additional reviews will be conducted by management staff and Community Development Council members.

What is the CFW-Neighborhood Services Department process as it relates to evaluators, meaning are the same evaluators used from previous year or alternative process, etc.?

The persons reviewing the applications include Neighborhood Services Department staff and Community Development Council members. Due to turnover, the specific individuals may change, but routinely include Compliance & Planning staff members as well as current Community Development Council members. The specific persons and applications to be reviewed is based on the number of applications received.

How are applications being reviewed in consideration of gyms being closed?

Gyms are slowly reopening and are expected to be open in some capacity by Fall 2021, when these funds will be made available. The locations to be used are to be determined by the agency and should be included in the application. In the event that a City of Fort Worth community center is used, confirmation should be made with the Center Coordinator/Supervisor prior to designating the location in an application.

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

How do I know what tier our agency will be in?

Review the below PSA funding thresholds; an agency needs to meet ALL qualifications for the selected tier to be considered in that category.

Tier I: \$45,000 (or more) – First-time applicants; in operation less than three years; not funded through the PSA RFP in the past three years

Tier II: \$60,000 (or more) – 3+ years in operation; funded through the PSA RFP 1-3 consecutive years; in good standing

Tier III: \$75,000 (or more) – 5+ years in operation; funded through the PSA RFP 3+ consecutive years; in good standing

Would an agency be considered a Tier I applicant, if it is a first time applicant, but has been operating for more than three years?

Yes. See response above.

If our agency received its 501(c)3 designation in 2018, does this qualify for Tier II funding?

No. See response above.

If our agency is a current CARES Act grant recipient, but not PSA, are we Tier I?

Yes. See response above.

Should funding fall within the Tiers? For example, Tier I should propose between \$40K and \$60K?

Applicants are encouraged to apply for funding that best reflects the agency's need for the proposed program. The funding thresholds are a guide for agencies in making them aware of possible funding awards based on specified criteria. These amounts not guaranteed and are based on funding availability.

Are the tier amounts the minimum or overall budget?

Tier amounts are an estimated minimum funding threshold that could be allocated to an agency based on the specified criteria shown above.

If the HUD grant allocation amount changes, do you anticipate the breakdown between the three categories will be about the same (e.g., 50% to HOPWA)?

No. Each grant has separate funding allocations and requirements. These allocations are subject to be increased or decreased each year; funding allocations are usually released in the Spring of each year.

Community Development Block Grant allows for 15% of the funding allocation to be awarded to Public Service Agencies. Emergency Solutions Grant allows for approximately 93% of the funding allocation to be awarded to Public Service Agencies. Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS allows for approximately 97% of the funding allocation to be awarded to Public Service Agencies.

Is all CDBG funding available to ONLY non-profits?

CDBG funding is available to Public Service Agencies, which includes nonprofits and social service agencies.

If our agency is not awarded funding, can we receive feedback about how to improve our application for following years?

Yes. Upon request, each applicant can receive the scoring sheet for the individual application, including any reviewer comments submitted.

What is the total % maximum this grant can cover from the total cost of agency program?

There is no set percentage maximum the grant can cover; it depends on the funding availability, program type, and application score. Ideally, no more than 50%-75% of the agency program would be covered by the grant.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Will all applicants be presenting to the CDC or select finalists?

All applicants will be scheduled to present to the Community Development Council. The proposed dates are April 21 and April 28.

For the CDC presentations, last year only new organizations/agencies had to present. Will this be the same case for 2021-2022 or will all organizations be presenting?

Yes. See response above.

Will the agency presentations be virtual?

Yes, the agency presentations scheduled on April 21 and April 28 will be virtual during the Community Development Council meeting.

Can we get the link for the CDC meeting?

Below is the link for the City of Fort Worth calendar, which will include the meeting link; CDC meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

<https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/calendar>