

FUNDED

A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

JUNE 2012 VOLUME 2, ISSUE 7

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR TRIBAL EDUCATION

IDENTIFYING YOUR

Target Population

GOVERNMENT & GRANTS:

Implications of the
Supreme Court Ruling on
Affordable Care Act (ACA)
Programs

GET ON BOARD WITH
ASSISTANCE TO
**FIREFIGHTERS
GRANTS**



3 The Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program

5 Government & Grants: Implications of the Supreme Court Ruling on Affordable Care Act (ACA) Programs

6 Identifying Your Target Population

7 A STEP in the Right Direction for Tribal Education

8 Get On Board With the Assistance to Firefighters Grants

10 Upcoming Events

SUBMIT A GUEST POST TO OUR BLOG, E-FUNDED!

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? BECOME A PART OF FUNDED BY SUBMITTING A GUEST BLOG POST.

FUNDED offers insightful, timely, and accurate grants information to the public. We reach thousands of recipients through our monthly publication and offer fresh content regularly on our blog. If you would like to contribute an original post about any grant-related topic, please send us an email at the address below and we will get in touch with you shortly.

FUNDED Guest Post Guidelines

1. All guest posts must be original content created by the submitter.
2. Posts should focus on a grant-related topic and be 300-500 words in length. Please review past blog entries for examples of the types of posts we are seeking.
3. Guest posts must include a biography of the writer (up to 500 characters in length).
4. You are welcome to include links to your website or mention your other publications; however, to maintain the integrity of the information provided in this blog, no hard selling will be allowed.
5. All published guest posts will be selected by Grants Office and will be edited for grammar, spelling, and mechanical errors prior to publication.
6. Guest posts may be published as articles in the monthly FUNDED publication with permission from the submitter.

For more information on how you can join the FUNDED conversation, please email Susannah Mayhall at smayhall@grantsoffice.com.

7



8





THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANTS (AFG) PROGRAM

SUMMARY The Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program awards one-year grants directly to fire departments and non-affiliated emergency medical services (EMS) organizations in order to enhance their abilities with respect to fire and fire-related hazards.

SAMPLE PROJECTS Pumper truck acquisition, hazmat training, CBRNE equipment, SCBAs, PPE for structural or wildland firefighting

DEADLINE 5:00 p.m. EDT on July 6, 2012

ELIGIBILITY Fire departments and non-affiliated EMS organizations

AWARD AMOUNTS For FY 2012, \$337 million total is available through a competitive grants process. Award amounts are based on population of the service area as follows:

- a) Applicants who serve a jurisdiction with a population of 500,000 people or less may not receive grant funds in excess of \$1,000,000 for any fiscal year.
- b) Applicants who serve a jurisdiction with more than 500,000, but not more than 1,000,000, people may not receive grant funds in excess of \$1,750,000 for any fiscal year.
- c) Applicants who serve a jurisdiction of more than 1,000,000 people may not receive grant funds in excess of \$2,750,000 for any fiscal year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/afggrants/index.shtm>



GOVERNMENT & GRANTS:

Implications of the Forthcoming Supreme Court Ruling on Affordable Care Act (ACA) Programs

By Chris LaPage

The link between grant programs and the legislative and executive branches of government is relatively clear. Many grant programs are written directly into federal legislation that is passed by members of Congress and signed by the President. Even if specific grant programs are not created through the legislation, funds may be provided to an executive branch agency with explicit authorization to address a particular purpose area, often times resulting in the creation of grant programs. Thus, when the TEA Party made strides in 2010 elections and Republicans took control of the House of Representatives, everyone wondered what the impact over the next decade on grant programs funded through the Affordable Care Act (also known as ACA or Health Care Reform Legislation). In fact, at the time I personally predicted in an article for this publication that future grant programming would remain relatively untouched considering Democratic control of both the Senate and Presidency as well as the fact

that grant programming represented some of the least polarizing components of the health care reform law. Of course, that very conclusion was completely based on the politics of future legislation in a divided legislative branch and Democratic Presidency. True to form, not much has changed through legislation in regards to the appropriations made through the ACA with one notable exception. Approximately \$5 billion (out of a total \$15 billion) was eliminated from the ACA Prevention and Public Health Fund as part of a bi-partisan compromise on extending the payroll tax cut earlier this year.

Case Background and Identification of Legal Issues

What most grantseekers fail to monitor and analyze is the potential impact of judicial court decisions on legislation, laws and grant programming. When it comes to potential court decisions, it does not get any bigger than the United States Supreme Court. When the Supreme Court issues a ruling,

it essentially becomes the law of the land until subsequent legislation is passed and signed into law. The future of the Affordable Care Act is on the line as we await a consolidated decision from the Supreme Court on two cases: Florida, et al. v. Department of Health and Human Services and National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius. The Supreme Court is expected to issue a ruling in June 2012. These cases can be boiled down to three essential issues that are now before the court: 1) The legality of the individual mandate clause, 2) Severability, and 3) The legality of conditioning a state's receipt of federal Medicaid funding on whether they expand program eligibility and benefits.

Examining the Legal Issues

The aforementioned third issue as to whether it violates principles of federalism for the federal government to coerce states into expanding Medicaid coverage by withholding funding will have no relative impact on

grant programming. The federal share of Medicaid funding is provided directly through states and is not distributed through a grant mechanism. Truth be told, the most prominent issue before the court, which relates to the legality of the individual mandate clause does not directly impact potential grant programming either. The individual mandate clause will require individual citizens to maintain minimum health care insurance coverage or face potential penalties. Opponents of the Health Care Reform Law claim that legislating such a requirement is not among the enumerated powers of Congress in Article I of the Constitution. If the court upholds this claim, the individual mandate portion of the law will be considered unconstitutional and will not go into effect as planned. Of course, Congress could always address the Court's concerns with subsequent legislation to amend the law in a way that makes it constitutional, but such a scenario is unlikely considering the opposition to the ACA in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

The Impact of 'Severability' on the Future of ACA Grant Programming

Since the individual mandate clause deals with minimum insurance coverage and civil penalties, many folks may still be unclear where the potential impact on grant programming occurs. In terms of the grants landscape, the future of ACA grant programs will come down to the Supreme Court decision on severability. While a ruling has not been issued, considering the make-up of the current Supreme Court and the questions that were asked during the court proceedings by the Justices, many experts feel the individual mandate will be stricken down as unconstitutional. If the Supreme Court strikes down the individual mandate requirement that was part of the ACA, they must also decide whether that particular component was so integrated into the fabric of the overarching legislation that the entire law would be invalidated. In other words, they must decide whether the rest of the provisions in the ACA are non-severable from the unconstitutional individual mandate. It is in these remaining provisions where tens of billions of dollars in grant funds have been appropriated over the next decade through the ACA.

Even though a decision on these cases has not yet been made (at the time this article was written), the looming Supreme Court decision already seems to be having an effect on the timing and marketing of ACA grant programs. For instance, it is no coincidence that the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has moved up the timetable on several grant programs that were not expected to be released until the beginning of FY 2013 (October 1, 2012). In light of the uncertainty over the Supreme Court decision on the ACA, the executive branch has apparently made it a priority to obligate as much ACA funding as possible ahead of the decision. Even if the Supreme Court strikes down the entire ACA, they cannot go back in time and recall dollars that have already been spent. This is perhaps why we have seen the recent release of \$75 million for the School-Based Health Center Capital Program (SBHCC). The grant solicitation, originally expected in Fall 2012, is aimed at assisting school-based health centers with capital construction, renovation and equipment acquisition projects. HHS is anticipating 150 award with individual applicants able to request up to \$500,000 in funding. Even when they are not necessarily moving up the timetable on certain ACA programs, they are ratcheting up the marketing and public relations machinery upon program release these days. For instance, HHS recently released \$70 million in funding for Community Transformation Grants (CTG) targeted at small communities (up to 500,000 population). You need not look farther than the program title to see the marketing arm

of HHS in full swing: "Community Transformation Grants - Small Communities Program Financed Solely by 2012 Prevention and Public Health Funds." These funds are meant for projects that take a community-wide approach to addressing chronic diseases such as diabetes, congestive heart failure, asthma and others through healthy changes in weight, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use, and overall emotional well-being and mental health. HHS wants to be sure that everyone is aware that funding for these important initiatives would not be available if not for the Affordable Care Act. Furthermore, while previous funding under the CTG banner typically flowed to state and local public health departments, eligibility for the Small Communities Program is relatively wide open with non-profit and community-based organizations able to lead applications to the program. Perhaps the new flexibility in eligibility criteria represent another example of HHS's attempt to commit and distribute as much of the ACA funding as quickly as possible.

Conclusions, Projections and More Uncertainty

So it is true that with one broad sweeping verdict, the Supreme Court could render the individual mandate clause as non-severable and effectively erase billions in grant dollars appropriated over the next decade through the ACA. As we have seen, the mere existence of the decision before the Supreme Court is altering the grants landscape, effecting both when and how ACA grant programs are being rolled out. In examining the legal arguments and analyzing the questions asked by the Supreme Court Justices during oral arguments, most legal scholars and pundits believe the individual mandate clause is in jeopardy. However, that analysis also indicates that the Justices appeared unconvinced by the plaintiffs' arguments around severability. In other words, the type and tone of questions asked by the Justice's seemed to indicate they could eliminate the individual mandate clause while keeping the remaining portions of the law mostly intact. If the legal experts are right and the ACA remains intact minus the individual mandate clause, there will be very little additional impact on the grant programs funded through the Affordable Care Act over the next decade. Of course, this is all conjecture until a final decision has been made and announced by the Supreme Court. In many ways, it is a vicious and never-ending cycle. After all, where exactly are we once we get a decision from the Supreme Court? Assuming the bulk of ACA remains law, we can move on to worrying about other things like how ACA grant programs will be impacted by upcoming bills submitted in Congress, executive orders issued by future Presidents, new laws that are passed, and subsequent court cases that are initiated. In many ways, the moral of the story is that you must keep tabs on all branches of the federal government (legislative, executive and judicial) if you want to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to projecting and preparing for future grant programming and funding levels.💡

School-Based Health Center Capital Program

The Application Technical Assistance Call, originally held May 24, is available for playback at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/assistance/sbhcc/>. The Grants.gov application for this program is due June 26. Supplemental information is due to HRSA's EHB by July 24.

Program details can be found at <http://upstream.grantsoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=29228>.

Identifying Your Target Population

By Susannah Mayhall

The decision to submit a grant application frequently stems from a combination of an organization's needs, broader goals, and the opening of a suitable grant program. However, once pen hits paper, these broader ideas must be fully examined and expressed in terms of specific goals that can be carried out and evaluated for success. One critical element of almost any grant program that can sometimes prove to be a sticking point is the identification of the proposed project's targeted population—in other words, who will benefit from the grant project. Your target population will likely be initially determined by your organization's current patients, students, community members, or other groups currently served, and by the parameters set out in the grant guidance. However, it is important to dig deeper and iron out specific details related to the target recipients of the project's services. By treating this facet of the application as an opportunity to demonstrate your project's readiness and anticipated effectiveness, you can strengthen your proposal's competitiveness and gain a favorable review from the granting agency. While developing specific details about your project's implementation can be difficult in the beginning stages of conception, it is well worth the extra effort.

Identifying Common Characteristics

The easiest way to start identifying your target population is to take a look at the

people you are currently serving. What are their characteristics? Do they fall within a certain age range? Do they live in specific areas? What common traits do they have? Mapping out your current constituency will give you an idea of the parameters you will likely be working within during the grant project.

Grant Requirements

After gaining a thorough understanding of your current service recipients, examine the small print of the grant program. Does the grant require you to impact a particular demographic? Is the grantor agency looking for projects that serve certain populations, e.g. frail elderly living in rural areas, tribal youth, or inner-city minority children? If so, it is in your best interest to tailor your proposal to match the agency's interests. While you don't want to stray too far from your current service population, the best fit grant programs for your organization will line up with that population to some degree, and will help you to hone in on your target population for the project.

Meeting Specific Needs

After you've gotten a clear picture of who you will be serving, including any relevant identifying characteristics such as age, social or ethnic group, economic standing, location, etc., start to think

about the needs of that population. What current obstacles does your target population face? What needs do they have? How will your project address those needs or mitigate barriers? At this point in the process, it might be useful to reach out to your targeted population through surveys, questionnaires, or even informal conversations, in order to gain a clearer perspective of how your project can best meet their needs. Not only will this information prove useful as you develop your grant proposal, it will also demonstrate to the grantor that your project has been well-researched and thoughtfully developed.

Identifying a target population can be one of the more challenging aspects of proposal development, and it might seem tempting when you're drowning amid budgets, narratives, resumes, letters, and other components to simply list your entire region or service population as the target population. However, by really thinking about who you want to serve, you can greatly strengthen your proposal and give yourself a better understanding of what you are trying to accomplish with your project, and that knowledge will come in handy in myriad ways as you develop your grant proposal and, hopefully, implement your project with grant funding. ▶





A STEP in the Right Direction for Tribal Education

By Ali Palmieri

With the funding landscape diminished across all sectors, it is refreshing to see a new program open up, especially a program focusing on Indian Education at the state level. The Department of Education introduced, on May 29, a pilot program called State-Tribal Education Partnership (STEP). Tribal education agencies (TEAs) will be able to apply for \$1.9 million in competitive grants.

Secretary Arne Duncan Speaks

Secretary Arne Duncan posted a video formally introducing the program, stating he visited tribal communities. Among the problems he saw, he felt that the children of these tribal communities are very motivated and need an education that will prepare them for success. One of the main purposes of STEP is for the TEAs to increase their role in American Indian and Alaskan native students' education. The role of TEAs will be elevated to be more impactful in the education spectrum. STEP will "encourage TEAs to enter in to collaborative agreements with SEAs to perform state level functions for certain ESEA former grant programs within schools located on tribally controlled lands."

Groundbreaking Work

Secretary Duncan also stated that this is "groundbreaking work." It is certainly true and if you look into the past, a collaboration like this has never occurred. Programs that have been effective in advancing tribal education are Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program (TCRGP), Tribal Colleges and University Programs (TCUP) and American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCU) (Title III, Part A). Although these programs have been important in shaping the tribal education spectrum, they do not focus on the state level and secondary side of education like STEP will.

Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance

Capacity-Building and Technical assistance are expected to be a main component of this pilot program. "Capacity-building activities" are activities increasing the capacity of: (1) TEA to carry out State-level responsibilities under the affected ESEA programs; (2) TEA and SEA to work together effectively on meeting the objectives of this pilot program; and (3) SEA to understand the unique cultural and academic needs of the students enrolled in participating schools

and how to address them more effectively. It is expected that capacity-building occurs through the provision of technical assistance, meaning activities that allow the recipient to effectively perform certain tasks or functions.

Timeframe

The timeframe for this grant is a notice of intent to apply for June 12, 2012 and the actual deadline is July 13, 2012. It is anticipated there will be 3-5 awards with an estimated average of \$450,000 for a single TEA in partnership with a single SEA or \$600,000 for a consortium of TEAs in partnership with a single SEA.

Webinars

To learn more, pre-application webinars have been scheduled for June 1 and June 5, 2012 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Washington, DC time each day. To participate in the webinar please send an email to: step@ed.gov with "Webinar" in the subject line. The program contact is Joyce A. Silverthorne, 202-260-3774, step@ed.gov.

GET ON BOARD

WITH THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANTS

By Michael Paddock

The US Fire Administration's (USFA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG or AFGP) is one of the most accessible and most transparent federal grants. It provides funds for turnout gear, training, communications, vehicles, technology, wellness programs, and a host of other needed improvements, such as multi-jurisdictional standardization of training. Fire departments and EMS agencies can submit up to three applications, one each in the categories of Operations and Safety, Vehicle Acquisition, and Regional Projects.

The application period for the program is open now, with a deadline of July 6. Awards are competitive, meaning that you will have to apply in order to get funding, and not everyone who applies will receive an award.

All applications require baseline data on call volume, a narrative description of the project and a budget. There is a matching requirement, and the specific cost share required is based on the population you are proposing to serve. Rural areas with populations of 20,000 or fewer have the lowest match (5%), while urban areas with populations of over 50,000 have the highest (20%).

OPERATIONS AND SAFETY

The most popular category for both applications and awards is Operations and Safety. This broad category covers training, equipment acquisition, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to facilities (usually exhaust im-

provements or other minor projects). There is no bonus or penalty for requesting several types of support under this category, but the justification you provide in your narrative should establish a coherent need for everything you've requested.

Applications for operations and safety projects are assessed based on call volume, the effect on the community and the effect on firefighter safety, so be sure those aspects of your project clearly connect with your request and avoid a "shopping cart proposal."

VEHICLE ACQUISITION

For each year of the program, the USFA establishes priorities for vehicle acquisition, based on whether



the applicant is a fire or EMS agency and whether the population is urban suburban or rural. Priority one vehicles are the most likely to be funded. Given the amount of funding available this year, don't expect many, if any, priority two or three vehicles to be funded.

The key case for vehicle acquisition grants is the need for the vehicle, based on your current vehicle's age or condition or a change in the community's demographic information that has led to a new demand for services that requires a particular vehicle.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

Regional projects are generally communications projects that enhance interoperability across a defined geographic area and including defined collaborators. Unlike other categories, regional projects allow non-fire (and non-EMS) agencies to participate and benefit from the funding, though an eligible fire department or EMS agency still has to take the lead in applying for and administering the funds.

The "region" is left up to the definition of the applicant, and can be as small as a group of towns and as large as a group of states.

USFA will use the potential impact of the project to evaluate its cost effectiveness, and therefore its fundability. That's important to keep in mind, since the award ceiling is based on the population served, and regional projects usually cover a large population. So, even though you may be able to apply for \$2 million, AFG reviewers are notoriously frugal, and you may find an excessive request denied, where a more moderate one would be approved. ♦



Grants Office provides affordable AFG grantwriting support for volunteer and professional fire departments and EMS agencies.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is one of only a few grants that reimburse awardees for the cost of grantwriting support. Grants Office has experience winning AFG applications for its clients, and our fee for writing AFG applications is only \$1,900, also making it one of the least expensive grants we write!

The fee is up front and not dependent upon an award, two criteria that the USFA requires to reimburse the cost of grantwriting, and you will not be reimbursed if you do not win an award.

Grants Office's grants development process is straightforward and managed by a team of grants professionals. Your grantwriter will work with you to collect the data required for the application, develop the project narrative, and review matching requirements. A Grants Office proposal editor will review your proposal for completeness and to ensure that it addresses the requirements of the AFG guidance for the category you're applying to. Finally, the Grants Office team will ensure that you are set up to submit your application electronically and that everything is uploaded and ready to submit.

To start the process, call Dan Casion, Grants Office's Manager of Grants Development and Administration, at (585) 327-4513 or e-mail grantwriting@grantsoffice.com.

EVENTS



GRANTS OFFICE

UPCOMING WEBCAST EVENTS

- Getting the Most Out of Your 2012 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Application
June 20, 2012 at 2pm EDT
- Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program:
Revitalize Your Community with Grant Funding
Coming Soon-Sign up for an invitation at <http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>
- Community Challenge Planning Grant Program: Bring Innovative Projects to your community
Coming Soon-Sign up for an invitation at <http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>
- Plan Ahead: Prepping for Funding in 2013
August 7, 2012 at 2:00PM EST
- Practice Makes Perfect: Funding Health Professional Education & Training Initiatives
October 23, 2012 at 2:00PM EST

RECENT WEBCAST RECORDINGS

- Making the Most of Expected Homeland Security Funding – Sponsored by VueTOO
Recorded May 22, 2012
- Maximizing K-12 Title Funding for Technology Initiatives – Sponsored by Cisco
Recorded May 17, 2012
- Transforming Healthcare: Grant Funding for Promising Innovations in Service Delivery & Patient Safety –
Sponsored by AT&T
Recorded May 1, 2012

These and other recordings are available for playback or download at
<http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>

**LEARN MORE AT WWW.GRANTSOFFICE.COM
AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND LINKEDIN**

