



NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Federal Agency Name: The Appraisal Subcommittee of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (ASC)

Funding Opportunity Title: State Appraiser Regulatory Agencies Support Grants

Announcement Type: Non-Competitive Federal Grants Assistance

Eligible Applicants: State Appraiser Certifying and Licensing Agencies (State Agencies)

CFDA Number: TBD

Key Dates: The first deadline for applications in this grant program is August 17, 2020. Successful applicants will be notified by email from the ASC grants office and may be asked to provide additional information or revise their proposals before the ASC makes the award. The ASC will take applications under this NOFA on a rolling basis. The next deadlines will be December 31, 2020, March 31, 2021 and June 30, 2021.

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This announcement and awards under this program are authorized under Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act (Title XI), section 1109 (b)(5), 12 U.S.C. 3338. Provisions under Title XI allow the Appraisal Subcommittee (ASC) to award grants to improve State appraiser 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 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 used in federally related transactions.

B. Purpose of the Program. The ASC will provide funds to eligible applicants to advance the appraiser regulatory field through support for programs, activities and purchases that include:

1. Improvements to and/or expansion of the appraiser and AMC complaint process, investigations, and enforcement activities;
2. Improvements to the process of submitting data on State credentialed appraisers and registered AMCs to the National Registries;
3. Participation in trainings and conferences to increase professional competency in the management and regulation of Appraiser and AMC Programs;
4. Expansion of appraiser credentialing opportunities in under-served markets; and/or
5. Other areas proposed by State Agencies and approved by the ASC.

C. Funded Activities. The ASC has identified the below budget categories to support proposed activities. The list is not inclusive, and applicants may propose other categories and activities to meet the purpose of the program described in B above. Activities should be new or an expansion of existing activities/programs. Federal funds should not be used to supplant expenditures already supported with State funds. Funds will be awarded to support ongoing (*e.g.*, annual participation in conferences or software subscriptions) and one-time (*e.g.*, computer upgrades or IT development projects) expenditures in categories that include:

1. Technology
2. Travel
3. Communications
4. Personnel
5. Training
6. Supplies
7. Other

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funds and Estimated Award Amounts. The ASC has allocated a total of \$10,008,000 over a three-year grant period with \$3,336,000 available in the first year for these non-discretionary grants to State Agencies. The ASC anticipates awarding up to 55 grants annually in amounts between \$25,000 and \$120,000 each per year.

B. Project Period. Grants will be for three years, with funding provided on an annual basis. The project period will be October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2023. Applicants should submit a proposal and budget for the first year (October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021) with estimated total amounts needed for years two and three. The ASC will make an initial award for the first year of operation. Continuation awards for the second and third year will depend upon availability of funds and satisfactory performance towards agreed-upon objectives/activities from the prior year. Proposed activities for the second and third year of the award can be modified in the applications for years two and three of the project period.

C. Type of Award. Under this NOFA applicants will receive a cost-reimbursement grant that will specify the total amount awarded based on a budget submitted to and negotiated and approved by the ASC. Grantees 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 State Agencies in each of the fifty U.S. States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands are eligible for ASC grants. State Agencies are responsible for credentialing and supervising certified and licensed real estate appraisers eligible to perform appraisals for federally related transactions as defined in Title XI, section 1121(4), 12 U.S.C. 3350; and/or (2) registering and supervising appraisal management companies (AMCs).

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 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 State Agencies 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

B. List of Required Application Elements. State Agencies 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 agencies as a condition of the grant.

C. Required Registrations

1. **DUNS and EIN.** All applications must include a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (soon to be called a UEI) and an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The DUNS number does not replace an EIN. 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. Check with the department that manages your budget to see if you already have a DUNS and EIN you should be using for this application.
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 four weeks before the application deadline for new or continuation grants. Once you have your number, it will have to be renewed annually before it expires. 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 program narrative, a budget and a budget narrative that covers the information described in Sections D2-D4 below. The program narrative can be no longer than five 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 five (5) pages.
 - Needs to be Met: Explain the needs or issues you plan to address with ASC grant funding.
 - Objectives to Meet Needs: List the objectives for your program and explain how your proposed approach will meet the needs you have described and advance the field.
 - Description of Activities: Describe your program design and activities to meet your objectives and make improvements to your processes and systems. Describe any innovative approaches you plan to use. Describe each staff position you will need to plan and conduct activities. Be clear about how you will meet the objectives and evaluate your progress and effectiveness. How will you know the program has been successful? Include plans to share the results of your program with other States.
 - Evidence of Organizational Capacity: Describe your organization's current staff configuration and the background and expertise of key staff members who will implement the objectives you are proposing. Be clear about staff expertise and prior activities that demonstrate you have the capacity to execute the objectives and activities you propose. Describe any planned partnerships that will be involved in implementing your proposed activities. Describe partner activities and key personnel. You may include Letters of Intent from proposed partners.
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, Columns e and f*
Section B, Columns 1 and 2
Section E, Columns b, c and d
Section F, Boxes 22 and 23 as needed

*Note: Use Column f only if you are providing non-federal resources to support the proposed project or activities. Match is not required but can be included if the proposed activity requires non-federal funds in order to be completed.

4. **Instructions for the Budget Narrative.** The budget narrative is a spreadsheet that ties your budget to the proposed activities and provides an explanation 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 professional 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 estimation of transportation, lodging and per diem.

Example: Conduct training sessions, each trip average of \$1,200 to various locations.

- d. **Equipment.** Equipment is defined as anything with a unit value over \$5,000 for federal grants; however, for states it is the amount states define for equipment either \$5,000 or generally lessor. Please be aware that you will need to maintain an inventory of all equipment following requirements described in 2 CFR 200.439 or inventory as defined by your state.
- e. **Supplies.** Do not list every supply separately. You should list purchases such as laptops and printers separately (assuming their cost is less than the state definition of equipment) but can list general office supplies as one line item.
- f. **Contractual.** Describe and list each contract separately. Contracts can be for materials or services. If just for individual consulting services, list the daily rate for each 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.** State Agencies that want to claim indirect costs on the grant must have a negotiated indirect cost rate with the federal government. If your agency 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 fringes, materials and supplies, services and travel, and up to the first \$25,000 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 $24,300 + 2,430 = 26,730$. The 10% is a fixed rate applicable to your MTDC expenditures as you incur costs.

5. **Instructions for the Certifications and Assurances.** Applicants must read and understand the certifications 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.

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

F. Submission Dates and Times. Applications are due by 5:00 pm EDT on August 17, 2020. Subsequent due dates will be December 31, 2020, March 31, 2021 and June 30, 2021.

G. Intergovernmental Review: Not Applicable for this grant competition

H. Funding Requirements and Restrictions

- If an application is approved for a grant, the State Agency 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 are 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

Under these non-competitive grants, 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 anticipates funding all 55 eligible State Agencies that apply and may have to adjust budgets and activities to accommodate all applicants given the amount of funds made available. 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, the ASC staff will work with agencies 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. **Identified Needs and Proposed Solutions (60%):** The extent to which the narrative describes the needs to be met and a well-thought-out program design to achieve the objectives, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing tasks. The narrative should include plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and ensure high-quality products and services.
2. **Organizational Capacity (20%):** The extent to which the narrative demonstrates the organization's capacity to oversee and monitor the program, including to provide facilities, equipment, and other resources in support of the program. The narrative should also demonstrate the organization's capacity to ensure both financial and programmatic compliance and accountability with rules and
3. **Budget and Cost Effectiveness (20%):** 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 applicants to clarify any issues and may need to adjust the scope of the project to meet budgetary limitations or bring the proposal within scope of allowable activities. Because these are non-competitive grants, the ASC will work with applicants to make any necessary adjustments until the award can be approved.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

The ASC will make awards following the review and any clarification or negotiation process. State Agencies may not begin grant activities until they receive a formal Notice of Grant Award (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 in the State Agency acknowledging that the State Agency, as 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 U.S. 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.

Use of Materials. Materials developed with ASC funding are available to the public. ASC reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so for public benefit (*See* 2 CFR 200.315.).

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

The ASC has scheduled a series of technical assistance calls and webinars to answer questions about the application process and requirements for managing federal grants. Topics, dates and times are listed below. In addition, you may email Mark Abbott at mark@ASC.gov

A. Questions about the Application Process and Allowable Activities.

Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 1:00 PM EDT

Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 4:00 PM EDT

Wednesday, August 12 at 1:00 PM EDT

Links to the online webinars will be published on ASC's website under the grants tab.

B. Basics of Managing a Federal Grant

Times and Dates to be announced on the ASC website and via email to every applicant.