

Questions Pertaining to Competitive Grant Applications

1. Are Adult Day Care Centers considered to be nutrition sites for the purposes of this grant program?

Response: Adult Day Care Centers providing NSIP eligible meals are considered nutrition sites for the purposes of Nutrition Services Grant Program (NSGP).

2. If a senior center previously received a grant through a Senior Community Center Capital Assistance Grant Program and has given assurance that they will remain in the location for 1 year for every \$5,000 of grant funds received and the same site receives a grant through the NSGP, will the 1 year for every \$5,000 assurance run concurrently with the existing commitment or will the time need to be added to the existing commitment?

Response: If an applicant requests funding for renovation and the building is rented or leased, the applicant must obtain written assurance from the building landlord that the site will continue operations in the renovated facility for at least one year for every \$5,000 of NSGP grant funds to be used in the renovation. If the site in question received funds through a previous Senior Community Center Capital Assistance grant requiring the same assurance, the time required for the NSGP will need to be added to the existing/previous commitment.

3. If an AAA owns their own meal production site that is operated by a contracted provider, will a grant application submitted by the AAA on behalf of the AAA be considered an eligible application?

Response: Yes.

4. If a provider is under contract with an AAA for senior center and home delivered meal services and the provider wants to modernize and upgrade both services, does this require two separate applications?

Responses: If two separate projects are proposed, two separate applications are required. The grant program is project-driven.

5. Will a NSGP application be considered for an amount less than \$20,000?

Response: No. The intent of the grant program is make meaningful and substantial changes.

6. Is it possible to consider extending the grant application deadline?

Response: Yes. The deadline has been extended to December 23, 2009. AAA Directors were notified by Secretary Hall of this extension on October 29, 2009 at the Quarterly. Written notification of this extension is forthcoming.

7. We contract with Meals on Wheels (in our county) for home delivered meals. Can the home delivered meal provider apply through us for the grant funds? They are not a center but strictly a home delivered meal non-profit agency.

Response: A contractor that provides meals that are funded through a local Area Agency on Aging are eligible to apply for NSGP funds.

8. Are Meals on Wheels providers who are not currently contracted with an AAA eligible to submit applications?

Response: No.

9. Is eligibility for applying limited to AAA-funded meal programs only?

Response: Yes.

10. Our current lease agreement does not expire until 2037 – is the lease sufficient proof of landlord's intent or must we also have a letter or statement from the landlord?

Response: Yes, the lease is sufficient proof.

11. What qualifies as back-up documentation?

Response: Examples of back-up documentation include but are not limited to copies of bids for equipment, copies of bids for renovations from contractors, assurance from a landlord and a lease.

12. Does back-up documentation, such as copies of bids or assurances from landlords, need to be submitted with an application?

Response: No. The documentation should be maintained on file in the event that the documentation is requested by PDA/OLTL staff. Applicants should indicate in the application that the documentation has been obtained and is on file.

13. In regard to completion of the application, will the requirement of limiting the response to each criteria to 2 pages, be strictly enforced?

Response: Failure to follow the prescribed format in completing the application may impact the evaluation of that application.

14. Do the grants need to be specifically tied to a single senior center/nutrition site? Or can ideas that focus on a geographic region (i.e. Center without Walls concept) or senior center marketing and community outreach be considered?

Response: Applications/grant requests do not need to be specifically tied to a single senior center/nutrition site. Projects that focus on a geographic area or marketing and community outreach may be considered. However, the application needs to be clear which nutrition sites are impacted by the application/grant request.

15. Will applications covering a service area vs. a single nutrition site be considered?

Response: Yes.

16. If certain sections of an application are not approved, will the project be partially funded or will the entire application/proposal be denied?

Response: Partial funding of an application/request may be possible.

17. If an AAA or provider has several sites that have already begun to modernize and update their facilities, can funding be approved for a site that has previously encumbered projects?

Response: No. If 'previously encumbered projects' had other funds committed for their completion, then NSGP funds can not be used to replace those funds.

18. The proposal (grant guidelines) states that eligible candidates for funding are existing center/nutrition site providers who plan on renovating space. We are already in the process of renovating an existing building (that we own) for a beautiful 10,000 square foot senior center while we are operating our small current center a couple of blocks away. Renovation plans call for a commercial kitchen and a lovely designated dining room. This enhancement will certainly allow us to follow up on our strategic plans for a breakfast program and cafe style dining with some partners we are exploring. Since this extent of renovation is not possible in our current small location, will our proposal be considered?

Response: If a proposed project is an enhancement and an addition to what is already underway, it may be considered.

19. Our renovation project to accomplish a new center, kitchen and dining facilities is underway. All aspects of this plan have been completed and construction is quite far along. In fact, we expect that renovations will be completed and ready for move in by the end of the year or early January. Since this is underway, will

we still be able to apply? Our funds for this project are only in part committed and we are still involved with raising capital. The timeframe meets the stimulus package intent so I am hoping that you will consider us to be eligible.

Response: If the organization has secured loans, lines of credit, or other methods of funding, to cover expenses or cost overruns but are looking to pay off the loans or lines of credit with grants funds, the request will not be considered. NSGP funds can not be used to replace other funding or other grants that have been obtained.

20. How detailed are the programmatic and budget sections of the application to be?

Response: Concise yet comprehensive responses should be developed for all sections so that all relevant issues are addressed.

21. How will each project be rated and reviewed?

Response: The highest possible score an application may receive is 100 points. Reviewers shall rate each application using the following: Maximum points for Project Description/Work Plan – 50 points; Modernization of Facility – 30 Points; and Experience, Ability and Financial Capacity – 20 points. Each criterion needs to be evaluated and scored, but the elements as noted on the application within each criterion do not need to be individually scored.

22. What are the 'elements within each criterion'?

Response: An example of the 'elements with each criterion' include: A. through L. under 1. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT/DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK PLAN, A. through K. under 3. APPLICANT'S EXPERIENCE, ABILITY AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY.

23. For the budget section of the application, are three bids required for proposed equipment needed for the project or is one bid sufficient?

Response: Applicants need to comply with Aging Block Grant and local procurement requirements.

24. In reference to compliance with provisions to the Davis-Bacon Act, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, Clean Air Act, Flood Disaster Protection Act, Federal Hatch Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11593, Archaeological Act, National Preservation Act, Steel Products Procurement Act, Trade Practices Act, Public Works Contractor's Bond Law of 1967, Resident Labor Requirement, Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act, Minority and Women Business Enterprise (Executive Order 1987-18) and Executive Order 1999-1, Older Americans Act, as amended Section 312 and 321 (b), Protecting Federal Reversionary Interest in Multipurpose Senior

Centers – Does the applicant simply state that they agree to comply? Is this sufficient? If not, what is the expectation to declare and substantiate ‘agrees to comply’?

Response: By applying, the applicant agrees to comply.

25. Will projects for nutrition sites that are open 5 days per week or have a higher participation rate be a higher priority than those open fewer days per week or have less participation?

Response: The desired outcome of the grant program is to fund projects that make nutrition services more functional and attractive, sustaining current levels of participation and/or attracting additional new individuals to the program. If an application is submitted for an innovative idea planned for implementation at a site that is not open five days a week or does not have a high participation rate, it does not automatically mean that it will be discounted. The overall merit of the idea and application should be considered.

26. Is the state seeking measurable outcomes (through the awarding of the grant funds)?

Response: No outcome measures have been established at this point in time, but applicants are encouraged to include them.

27. What is required for sufficiency under the Budget Summary Narrative Section (in addition to the ‘Requested Amounts Section’)?

Response: No additional narrative is required in this section. It is expected that general descriptive information pertaining to the equipment and furnishings, construction and/or renovations will be included under 1. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT/DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK PLAN or UNDER 2. PROJECT MODERNIZATION. Itemized cost sheets do not need to be submitted.

28. Referencing the application form – under 3. APPLICANT’S EXPERIENCE, ABILITY, AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY, F. For projects with multiple funding sources, the applicant must provide written assurance that the other funding sources are committed at the time of the application – Can such commitments be conditional per the issuance of an award in this grant process?

Response: If the applicant has multiple funding sources for their project or potential multiple funding sources, they indicate in this section if the funding source, is, in fact, committed or if other funding sources are conditional and will only provide their funds if an NSGP grant award is received.

29. What is the anticipated time frame for the release of the funds for approved competitive grant projects?

Response: It is anticipated that funds will be released in the spring of 2010 at the earliest.

30. Will the funds be released to the AAAs?

Response: Yes, the funds will be released to the AAAs.

31. Do AAAs have the latitude to require center or nutrition subcontractors to submit their applications earlier than December 23 so that the AAA has adequate time to review and rank the projects submitted?

Response: December 23 is the deadline for applications to be submitted to PDA/OLTL. The AAAs will need to require centers or nutrition subcontractors to submit their applications before December 23, so that the AAAs have time to review and rank the applications. Each AAA may determine their own due date by which the local applications are due.

32. May funds be requested to cover a projected shortfall of AAA contract funds instead of using fundraised money to cover the cost of these (HDM) consumers' meals?

Response: No

33. May funds be requested to equip a satellite office for the HDM provider (telephone, computer, electrical upgrades to permit the space to function as a drop-off point)?

Response: Yes, if the request meets the intent of the grant program.

34. May funds be requested for purchase of equipment related to preparation and delivery of an increasing number of meals? Items such as an additional oven, hot and cold delivery bags, septic system upgrade, and an additional walk-in freezer?

Response: Yes, as long as the items requested/project meets the intent of the grant program.

35. Can just one grant application be completed for all needs pertaining to the home delivered meals program in the county?

Response: Yes, as long as the request meets the intent of the grant program.

36. May a narrative accompany the application form, as there isn't a lot of space on the form?

Response: No.

37. Since home delivered meals and senior centers are separate services, will they be considered separately? Could a center apply for a grant for each? Could we be funded for both?

Response: One or two applications may be required, depending on the nature of the project (s).

38. Can this grant be used towards the purchase of a larger building so that more meals can be provided?

Response: Yes.

39. Can the grant be used towards portable kitchen equipment so that it can move with the center to a larger facility?

Response: Yes.

40. If we have two or more senior centers that together make the \$20,000 can we combine them and apply for it under our name?

Response: Yes, but be sure to indicate the centers affected in the application.

41. Can organizations that do not contract with the AAA apply for the competitive grants? Ex. A local self sufficient MOW program which has not wanted to receive AAA funds due to the requirements of the federal meals programs.

Response: No.

42. Can the funds be used to relocate a senior center?

Response: It is possible if the intent of the grant program is met.

43. In addition to food service equipment and renovation cost, can we also add a piece of equipment to handle floor care of the dining area?

Response: Yes.

44. Please clarify – when will organizations be advised if they have been selected? Once centers are advised of the grant award, can they start the project?

Response: Every effort will be made to announce award decisions by late January or February. Projects may begin when the award decisions are announced.

45. Since the funds will be released in the spring, does that mean the work completion time is extended?

Response: (Competitive grant) Projects can cover the time from January 2010 until December 2010. The AAA needs to be specific on the amount to be spent by June 30, 2010 and also the amount to be spent during the July to December 2010 period. Funds received through the agency's allocation need to be used this fiscal year, by June 30, 2010.

46. Since the funds are not available until 2010, how can we pay for projects that may be approved for the grant?

Response: AAAs may use Aging Block Grant funds or local funds to cover initial expenses until they receive the grant funds.

47. Can the grant be used towards renovations such as beverage bar, new flooring, chairs, tables or other furnishings?

Response: Yes.

48. Please clarify – how is new construction different from the purchase of a new building? Why is one allowed and not the other?

Response: New construction is a completely new building while the purchase of a new building involves a building that already exists. New construction would not be able to be completed in a timely manner, i.e. by the time the grant funds must be used.

49. We have already upgraded and paid for a new facility through a capital campaign which included a commercial kitchen, salad bar, café, etc. We are, however, in need of some equipment to further improve our nutrition program, i.e. dinnerware, silverware, tables, chairs, commercial waffle iron and omelet station. The total costs of these exceeds \$20,000 and were not part of our capital campaign. Would these be eligible for this grant?

Response: Yes, if they are in addition to the existing project – but are an enhancement (and funds have not already been raised. Grant funds can not replace funds that have already been raised or to pay off loans or lines of credit that were obtained and intended to be used for the items listed above).

50. In case we do not get funding from another source, what is the maximum amount of money that we can ask for from the competitive grant to enhance

and modernize my existing meal program, not including the allocated money assigned to my AAA?

Response: The maximum amount that may be requested for a project is \$150,000.

51. If a project cannot be completed by 6/30/10, and therefore all allocated monies cannot be spent; will we be able to receive partial funding and then receive the rest after 7/1/10?

Response: All allocation amounts must be spent by 6/30/10. Competitive grant applications must indicate the amount to be spent by June 30, 2010 and any carryover amount to be spent by December 31, 2010. All competitive grant funds must be spent by December 31, 2010.

52. If the cost of a project, e.g. equipment or facilities, changes between the bidding process and the start of construction, do we need to notify PDA? If so, what shall be involved?

Response: No, PDA/OLTL does not need to be notified if the cost of equipment or facilities changes between the bidding process and start of construction.

53. Our senior center is involved in a merger with 1 or 2 centers. At this time, we do not have a name for our proposed new center or we have not yet decided if we will be leasing and improving a site or purchasing a site and make improvements. Do we need to have a name for our center and a site determination at the time of the application? We know that we are merging because we are being required by our AAA to do so.

Response: A project name needs to be identified (and scope of the project needs to be described). A current center name can be used.

54. Since this is project-driven, can we request \$150,000 for purchase of property and (submit) separate request for \$150,000 for equipment?

Response: Based on this question, this would be considered one project. \$150,000 is the maximum amount that can be requested.

55. Please clarify – Does the \$150,000 limit relate to the grant application or per the applicant's program, i.e. one applicant applying for a senior center and adult day care. Would this applicant be eligible for the maximum grant for each program?

Response: The \$150,000 limit relates to each application/each project.

56. When will reporting requirements information be provided to AAAs? (Is it fair to assume that data collection methods required for reporting will be required in the work plan?)

Response: Reporting requirements will be provided to the AAAs in the near future. Regarding data collection, additional information will need obtained so that a response may be provided.

57. Will a request be considered that will enhance the HDM consumer's life to provide some enjoyment/socialization for those who are unable to leave their home settings – which will provide more than the basic need for food? We are feeding them, but are we actually making their lives more manageable, enjoyable and/or meaningful? This does not involve equipment, bricks or mortar, but is a much needed element to the program but would require funding for staff as a unique approach/enhancement to the standard HDM program.

Response: The grant program can consider an enhancement to the HDM program, but cannot fund staff salaries or anything that would 'increase the base' after the time period for which the grant funds are available.

58. Can you explain more about the going green concept by giving some examples of how it relates to a project to be funded under NSGP?

Response: A project that may be considered environmentally friendly, equipment that is energy saving or reduce the amount of energy used are examples.

59. Are estimates for construction or purchases, etc. needed – if so, how many?

Response: Follow Aging Block Grant and local procurement requirements. Copies of estimates or bids should be kept on file.

60. If our agency is submitting applications for multiple items (i.e. such as steam tables) can they be submitted as one or are multiple submissions necessary?

Response: The same application may be used, but if more than one nutrition site is affected/benefits, please describe this on the application.

Questions Pertaining to the Agency Allocation

61. If an AAA utilized funds last fiscal year to make nutrition site improvements which resulted in cost overruns, can the funds an AAA received in their NSGP allocation be used to cover the cost overruns?

Response: No.

62. Does the AAA have to use the funds received through their allocation in one nutrition site?

Response: If the AAA chooses to utilize their allocation to make several 'smaller changes' that is permitted as long as the funds are utilized following the intent of the grant program.

63. Can the funds provided through the agency's allocation be used to enhance a grant application?

Response: The allocation funds should be used for projects that can stand alone without the support of a NSGP grant.

64. Are there specifics regarding how the funds provided through the allocation are to be spent?

Response: The funds should be spent following the intent of the grant. Examples include but are not limited to: updating the service style (installing equipment that is tailored to implement a café style area) or purchasing equipment or completing renovations that support a breakfast or evening meal program at a nutrition site for an amount within the agency's allocation. More examples are outlined in the cover memo that accompanied the grant announcement and also in the Guidelines and Procedures.

65. When will the AAA allocation be distributed?

Response: January 1, 2010.

66. If funding is used under the non-competitive grant (allocation) to keep a center open, can salaries be paid with that funding?

Response: No.

67. The NSGP states that the minimum award is \$20,000 and the maximum is \$150,000. Our counties (Luzerne and Wyoming) are listed at \$40,473.00. Does this mean we would be eligible for a larger award than the \$40, 473.00?

Response: The amount of \$40, 473.00 is the allocation amount for Luzerne/Wyoming. The allocation amount is separate from the amount of funding available for competitive grants under the NSGP. The AAA for Luzerne/Wyoming may submit applications for the competitive grants.

68. Could you clarify and explain in detail how the allocation formula was derived?

Response: It was determined that of the \$4.5 million available, \$1.5 million would be distributed in the form of an allocation and \$3 million would be made available through competitive grants. In regard to how the \$1.5 million

was distributed, it was determined that no agency would receive less than \$20,000. The remaining balance was distributed based on the current funding formula.