

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Policy Research Division

National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program

Funding Opportunity Number: HRSA-19-021
Funding Opportunity Types: New and Competing Continuation
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 93.155

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Fiscal Year 2019

Application Due Date: February 28, 2019

*Ensure your SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations and passwords are current immediately!
HRSA will not approve deadline extensions for lack of registration.
Registration in all systems, including SAM.gov and Grants.gov,
may take up to 1 month to complete.*

Issuance Date: November 30, 2018

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Authority: Section 711 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 912), as amended.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2019 National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program. The purpose of this program is to identify, educate, engage, and collaborate with rural stakeholders on national rural health and policy issues and promising practices in an effort to improve the health of people living in rural communities nationwide.

Funding Opportunity Title:	National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program
Funding Opportunity Number:	HRSA-19-021
Due Date for Applications:	February 28, 2019
Anticipated Total Annual Available FY 2019 Funding:	\$2,300,000
Estimated Number and Type of Award:	One cooperative agreement
Estimated Award Amount:	Up to \$2,300,000 per year dependent on the availability of appropriated funds
Cost Sharing/Match Required:	No
Period of Performance:	August 1, 2019 through July 31, 2024 (5 years)
Eligible Applicants:	Eligible applicants include all domestic public, private and nonprofit organizations. See Section III-1 of this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for complete eligibility information.

Application Guide

You (the applicant organization/agency) are responsible for reading and complying with the instructions included in HRSA's *SF-424 Application Guide*, available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424guide.pdf>, except where instructed in this NOFO to do otherwise.

Technical Assistance

HRSA has scheduled the following technical assistance:

Webinar

Day and Date: Monday, December 10, 2018

Time: 2 – 3 p.m. ET

Call-In Number: 1-800-369-3168

Participant Code: 2464074

Web link: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/fy19_nofu_hrsa-19-021/

Playback Number: 1-866-382-4790

Passcode: 8349

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I. Program Funding Opportunity Description

1. Purpose

This notice announces the opportunity to apply for funding under the National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program. The purpose of this program is to identify, engage, educate, and collaborate with rural stakeholders on national rural health policy issues and promising practices in an effort to improve the health of people living in rural communities nationwide.

Program objectives include:

- (1) Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health.
- (2) Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities.
- (3) Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, state, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and promising practices that support rural health.
- (4) Identifying and promoting broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

A successful program will continue to build upon the federally funded resources that currently exist, leverage the broad network of rural health organizations and individual subject matter experts, and provide a mechanism for the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) to engage with public rural health stakeholders beyond Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funded award recipients and current partners to add value, information, and support to rural communities.

2. Background

This program is authorized by Section 711 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 912), as amended. FORHP, located within HRSA, is the focal point for rural health activities within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). FORHP is statutorily required to advise the Secretary of HHS on the effects of current policies and proposed statutory, regulatory, administrative and budgetary changes in Medicare and Medicaid programs on the financial viability of small rural hospitals, the ability of rural areas to attract and retain physicians and other health professions, and access to and the quality of health care in rural areas. To learn more about FORHP, visit <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health>.

II. Award Information

1. Type of Application and Award

Types of applications sought: New, Competing Continuation

HRSA will provide funding in the form of a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is a financial assistance mechanism where substantial involvement is anticipated between HRSA and the recipient during performance of the contemplated project.

HRSA Program involvement will include:

- Providing guidance in planning, operation, and evaluation activities;
- Providing support in the identification and selection of policy issues and the analysis of key information sources (e.g., regulations);
- Providing guidance and assistance in identifying key organizations through which to share information on emerging policy issues;
- Providing guidance and assistance in identifying key organizations with whom to partner and collaborate;
- Participating, as appropriate, in the planning of any meetings, educational activities, or workgroups conducted during the period of the cooperative agreement;
- Identifying opportunities and providing guidance on strategies for disseminating information about programs and activities;
- Reviewing and providing input on activities and findings under this award prior to public dissemination; and
- Identifying or suggesting special projects, studies, products or publications around emerging rural health issues.

The cooperative agreement recipient's responsibilities will include:

- Working collaboratively with HRSA and responding to HRSA requests, comments, and questions on a timely basis;
- Engaging HRSA and rural stakeholders in the planning, execution and evaluation of activities, including the identification of technical assistance and educational/development needs and the selection of mechanisms for implementation;
- Serving as the central organizing body for partnership convening, educational activities, or workgroups conducted during the period of the cooperative agreement;
- Identifying key rural health policy issues and developing educational materials to inform a broad variety of rural stakeholders, determined in collaboration with HRSA;
- Identifying opportunities and developing dissemination strategies to share pertinent information and results with various stakeholders in rural communities, determined in collaboration with HRSA; and
- Highlighting unique examples of successful rural health initiatives through various platforms.

2. Summary of Funding

HRSA expects approximately \$2,300,000 to be available annually to fund one recipient. You may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$2,300,000 total cost (includes both direct and indirect, facilities and administrative costs) per year. The period of performance is August 1, 2019 through July 31, 2024 (5 years). Funding beyond the first year is

dependent on the availability of appropriated funds for National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program in subsequent fiscal years, satisfactory recipient performance, and a decision that continued funding is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

All HRSA awards are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements at [45 CFR part 75](#).

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include domestic public, private and nonprofit organizations including domestic faith-based and community organizations, state governments and their agencies such as universities, colleges, research institutions, hospitals, local governments or their bona fide agents, federally recognized tribal governments, tribes, and tribal organizations are also eligible.

2. Cost Sharing/Matching

Cost sharing/matching is not required for this program.

3. Other

HRSA will consider any application that exceeds the ceiling amount non-responsive and will not consider it for funding under this notice.

HRSA will consider any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.4* non-responsive and will not consider it for funding under this notice.

NOTE: Multiple applications from an organization are not allowable.

If for any reason (including submitting to the wrong funding opportunity number or making corrections/updates) an application is submitted more than once prior to the application due date, HRSA will only accept your **last** validated electronic submission, under the correct funding opportunity number, prior to the Grants.gov application due date as the final and only acceptable application.

Any student, trainee, or other person receiving support from award funds must be a citizen of the United States or a foreign national having in his/her possession a visa permitting permanent residence in the United States.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

HRSA **requires** you to apply electronically. HRSA encourages you to apply through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) using the SF-424 workspace application package associated with this NOFO following the directions provided at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

If you are reading this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) (also known as “Instructions” on Grants.gov) and reviewing or preparing the workspace application package, you will automatically be notified in the event HRSA changes and/or republishes the NOFO on Grants.gov before its closing date. Responding to an earlier version of a modified notice may result in a less competitive or ineligible application. *Please note you are ultimately responsible for reviewing the [For Applicants](#) page for all information relevant to desired opportunities.*

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Section 4 of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) provides instructions for the budget, budget narrative, staffing plan and personnel requirements, assurances, certifications, and abstract. You must submit the information outlined in the Application Guide in addition to the program-specific information below. You are responsible for reading and complying with the instructions included in HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) except where instructed in the NOFO to do otherwise. You must submit the application in the English language and in the terms of U.S. dollars (45 CFR § 75.111(a)).

See Section 8.5 of the *Application Guide* for the Application Completeness Checklist.

Application Page Limit

The total size of all uploaded files may not exceed the equivalent of **50 pages** when printed by HRSA. The page limit includes the abstract, project and budget narratives, attachments, and letters of commitment and support required in the *Application Guide* and this NOFO. Standard OMB-approved forms that are included in the workspace application package do not count in the page limit. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement and proof of non-profit status (if applicable) do not count in the page limit. **We strongly urge you to take appropriate measures to ensure your application does not exceed the specified page limit.**

Applications must be complete, within the specified page limit, and validated by Grants.gov under the correct funding opportunity number prior to the deadline to be considered under this notice.

Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion Certification

- 1) The prospective recipient certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.

- 2) Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 45 CFR § 75.371, including suspension or debarment. (See also 2 CFR parts 180 and 376, and 31 U.S.C. 3321).
- 3) Where the prospective recipient is unable to attest to the statements in this certification, an explanation shall be included in **Attachment #6: Other Relevant Documents**.

See Section 4.1 viii of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for additional information on all certifications.

Program-Specific Instructions

In addition to application requirements and instructions in Section 4 of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#) (including the budget, budget narrative, staffing plan and personnel requirements, assurances, certifications, and abstract), include the following:

i. Project Abstract

See Section 4.1.ix of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#).

Please include the following information at the top of the abstract:

- Project title
- Applicant organization name
- Applicant organization location (street, city, state, zip code)
- Applicant organization website, if applicable
- Project Director name and title
- Project Director contact information (phone and e-mail)

ii. Project Narrative

This section provides a comprehensive framework and description of all aspects of the proposed project. It should be succinct, self-explanatory and well organized so that reviewers can understand the proposed project.

Successful applications will contain the information below. Please use the following section headers for the narrative:

- *INTRODUCTION -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (1) Need*

Briefly describe the purpose of the proposed project, and your knowledge of/experience working with rural stakeholders at the local, regional, state, and national level. Describe how the project will continue to build upon the federally funded resources that currently exist, leverage a broad network of rural health organizations (e.g., agricultural health and safety, state-level rural health organizations, workforce/recruitment and retention) and individual subject matter experts, and provide a mechanism for HRSA to engage with public rural health stakeholders beyond current award recipients and partners to add value, information, and support to rural communities.

▪ *NEEDS ASSESSMENT -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (1) Need*

In order to identify, educate, engage, and collaborate with rural stakeholders on national rural health policy issues and promising practices in order to support rural communities nationwide you will be fulfilling the following program objectives referenced in the Purpose section:

- (1) Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health.
- (2) Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities.
- (3) Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, state, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and promising practices that support rural health.
- (4) Identifying and promoting broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

The needs assessment should help reviewers understand the needs to be fulfilled by the proposed project and provide the context and rationale for the proposed work plan and budget. This section should also help reviewers understand the needs of the rural stakeholders, communities, and/or entities that will be served by the proposed project and provide context and rationale for the inclusion of subject matter experts and any other proposed partners.

This section should demonstrate your knowledge of the existing nationwide issues in rural health. You should discuss any relevant data to support the discussion of need. You should also discuss the need to provide education to stakeholders about national issues, community engagement, and collaboration with nationwide rural stakeholders. Discuss barriers that the proposed project hopes to overcome in regards to a nationwide approach.

▪ *METHODOLOGY -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criteria (2) Response and (4) Impact*

Propose methods that you will use to address the stated needs and meet each of the previously described program objectives in this NOFO. As appropriate, include development of effective tools and strategies for ongoing outreach, collaborations, clear communication, and information sharing/dissemination with rural stakeholders.

You should discuss the proposed methodology, including innovative methods, for addressing the following objectives:

- (1) Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health, topics may include:
 - a. Quality Improvement;
 - b. Finance;
 - c. Access;
 - d. Workforce (including Community Health Workers/Promotoras);
 - e. Health Information Technology/Telehealth;

- f. Rural Primary Care Issues;
- g. Rural Hospital Issues;
- h. Border Health;
- i. Opioids;
- j. Behavioral Health; and
- k. Other existing and emerging rural health policy issues determined in collaboration with HRSA.

(2) Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities, for example:

- a. Providing forums for stakeholders to share best practices on building on successful community health initiatives;
- b. Highlighting unique examples of community and individual health leadership through various platforms and publications;
- c. Supporting access to care in rural communities by strengthening the rural workforce (e.g., recruitment and retention efforts, community health workers/promotoras, etc.); and
- d. Identifying and supporting the universe of ongoing rural communities and networks who have leveraged multiple HRSA awards to develop innovative rural health projects under Section 330A of the Public Health Service Act.

(3) Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, state, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and promising practices that support rural health, including:

- a. Federal partners;
- b. State-based entities such as State Rural Health Associations (SRHAs), State Offices of Rural Health (SORHs), and other rural-relevant entities;
- c. Private foundations and philanthropic organizations addressing issues of importance to rural health care; and
- d. Other partners and subject matter experts, particularly those with expertise on topics such as workforce/recruitment and retention, agricultural health, telehealth, health disparities, rural health leadership and networking, and other existing or emerging areas of focus to be determined in collaboration with HRSA.

(4) Identifying and promoting broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

Discuss your plan for including the partners and stakeholders that will be key to the success of this program, such as:

- a. Subject matter experts (both individuals and organizations) on each of the topics identified under Policy, Community, and Collaboration objectives;
- b. Federal partners;
- c. Key state-based entities such as SRHAs, SORHs, and state hospital associations;
- d. Rural hospitals and community health systems;
- e. Philanthropies;
- f. Current and future rural health leaders;

- g. Current and former HRSA award recipients with a particular focus at the rural community health level, as identified by HRSA; and
- h. Other key partners as proposed by you as well as those identified in collaboration with HRSA.

Discuss your plans for dissemination of project results and/or the extent to which project results are national in scope and/or the degree to which the project activities are replicable, and/or the sustainability of the program, and related partnerships, beyond the period of federal funding.

Discuss your plan for developing and disseminating program materials that can be used by rural health entities and policymakers.

Discuss how any previous rural health activities have been used to create rural promising practices nationally.

- *WORK PLAN -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (2) Response*

Describe the activities or steps that you will use to achieve each of the objectives proposed during the entire period of performance in the Methodology section. Use a time line that includes each activity and identifies responsible staff. As appropriate, identify meaningful support and collaboration with key stakeholders in planning, designing, and implementing all activities, including developing the application.

The work plan should cover a five (5) year period of performance explaining activities to begin August 1, 2019 and going no longer than July 31, 2024. You should include a year-by-year breakout of the work plan. The work plan should provide goals, objectives, activities, responsible staff, timelines (when possible), and metrics (process and outcome measures).

- *RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (5) Resources/Capabilities*

Discuss challenges that you are likely to encounter in designing and implementing the activities described in the work plan, and approaches that you will use to resolve such challenges.

You should discuss the unique challenges in the four objectives:

1. Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health.
2. Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities.
3. Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, state, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and best practices that support rural health.
4. Identify and promote broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

Discuss how you will overcome these challenges and what strategies you will use.

- *EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (3) Evaluative Measures*

Describe your plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation should monitor ongoing processes and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project and measure both the output and the impact of the program. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key processes, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. Quantitative and qualitative data should be used to capture program performance and impact. The final list of measures will be determined collaboratively with HRSA. Examples of potential measures include (but are not limited to):

- Number/types of convenings/forums of rural stakeholders and partners to share promising practices and outcomes, including community impact, associated with those convenings/forums;
- Number of communities assisted in recruitment and retention efforts and the number of successful placements as a result of those efforts;
- Outputs and outcomes (including impact) of rural health educational opportunities and information dissemination campaigns around rural health promising practices;
- Number of key policy issues identified, approaches employed to educate stakeholders and impact of those efforts;
- Number of farms/agricultural businesses educated on agri-health issues and resulting number of farms/agricultural businesses certified as safe working environments;
- Number of community health workers/promotoras receiving education/training and resulting impact of those efforts (e.g., standardized competencies around a specific disease state); and
- Outputs and outcomes (including impact) of activities directly related to program objectives.

- *ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion (5) Resources/Capabilities*

Succinctly describe your organization's current mission and structure (including **Attachment 4: Organizational Chart**), scope of current activities, and existing partnerships with relevant national organizations. Describe how these elements contribute to your organization's ability to conduct the program requirements, support the proposed work plan, and meet program expectations.

Discuss how the organization will follow the approved plan, as outlined in the application, properly account for the federal funds, and document all costs to avoid audit findings.

Describe your existing relationships and experience working with key partners and stakeholders listed below. Provide specific examples to support organizational relationships with these entities. This may include letters of support/agreement from proposed partners (**Attachment #3**):

- a. Subject matter experts on each of the topics identified under Policy, Community, and Collaboration activities found in the Methodology section;
- b. Federal partners;
- c. Key state-based entities such as SRHAs and SORH;
- d. Rural hospitals and community health systems;
- e. Philanthropies;
- f. Current and future rural health leaders;
- g. Current and former HRSA award recipients with a particular focus on those at the rural community health level; and
- h. Other key partners as proposed by you as well as those that will be identified in collaboration with HRSA.

Describe organizational expertise and history regarding the activities listed below.

Describe qualified project personnel that have extensive experience to carry out all aspects of the project on a national level. Provide specific examples, data, and outcomes to support organizational experience and success in:

- Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health;
- Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities;
- Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, state, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and promising practices that support rural health; and
- Identifying and promoting broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

Describe your organization's experience with and ability to convene key rural health stakeholders at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

Describe your organization's existing relationships with and ability to convene key community-level stakeholders (i.e., not limited to national level organizations) from the start of the period of performance from the following areas:

- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Rural Health Clinics
- Hospitals/Health Systems
- Frontier Communities
- Public Health
- Research and Education
- State-Level Organizations/Resources
- Students

Describe your organization's experience utilizing federal funding sources to strengthen or increase partnerships, obtain additional funding (both federal and non-federal), and improve the outputs and outcomes associated with your program objectives. Describe how program activities have been leveraged beyond the period of federal funding to increase impact.

NARRATIVE GUIDANCE	
To ensure that you fully address the review criteria, this table provides a crosswalk between the narrative language and where each section falls within the review criteria.	
<u>Narrative Section</u>	<u>Review Criteria</u>
Introduction	(1) Need
Needs Assessment	(1) Need
Methodology	(2) Response and (4) Impact
Work Plan	(2) Response
Resolution of Challenges	(5) Resources/Capabilities
Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity	(3) Evaluative Measures
Organizational Information	(5) Resources/Capabilities
Budget and Budget Narrative (below)	(6) Support Requested – the budget section should include sufficient justification to allow reviewers to determine the reasonableness of the support requested.

iii. Budget

See Section 4.1.iv of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#). Please note: the directions offered in the SF-424 Application Guide may differ from those offered by Grants.gov. Follow the instructions included in the Application Guide and the additional budget instructions provided below. A budget that follows the Application Guide will ensure that, if HRSA selects the application for funding, you will have a well-organized plan and by carefully following the approved plan can avoid audit issues during the implementation phase.

Reminder: The Total Project or Program Costs are the total allowable costs (inclusive of direct **and** indirect costs) incurred by the recipient to carry out a HRSA-supported project or activity. Total project or program costs include costs charged to the award and costs borne by the recipient to satisfy a matching or cost-sharing requirement, as applicable.

The Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 115-245), Division B, § 202 states, “None of the funds appropriated in this title shall be used to pay the salary of an individual, through a grant or other extramural mechanism, at a rate in excess of Executive Level II.” See Section 4.1.iv Budget – Salary Limitation of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for additional information. Note that these or other salary limitations may apply in the following FY, as required by law.

iv. Budget Narrative

See Section 4.1.v. of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#).

v. Attachments

Provide the following items in the order specified below to complete the content of the application. **Unless otherwise noted, attachments count toward the application page limit.** Indirect cost rate agreements and proof of non-profit status (if applicable) will not count toward the page limit. You must clearly label **each attachment**.

Attachment 1: Staffing Plan and Job Descriptions for Key Personnel (see Section 4.1. of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#)) REQUIRED

Keep each job description to one page in length as much as is possible. Include the role, responsibilities, and qualifications of proposed project staff. Also, please include a description of your organization's timekeeping process to ensure that you will comply with the federal standards related to documenting personnel costs.

Attachment 2: Biographical Sketches of Key Personnel REQUIRED

Include biographical sketches for persons occupying the key positions described in Attachment 2, not to exceed two pages in length per person. In the event that a biographical sketch is included for an identified individual not yet hired, include a letter of commitment from that person with the biographical sketch.

Attachment 3: Letters of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, and/or Description(s) of Proposed/Existing Contracts (project-specific) OPTIONAL

Provide any documents that describe working relationships between your organization and other entities and programs cited in the proposal. Documents that confirm actual or pending contractual or other agreements should clearly describe the roles of the contractors and any deliverable. Make sure any letters of agreement are signed and dated.

Attachment 4: Project Organizational Chart REQUIRED

Provide a one-page figure that depicts the organizational structure of the project.

Attachment 5: SF-424A For Multi-Year Budgets--5th Year Budget (NOT counted in page limit) REQUIRED

After using columns (1) through (4) of the SF-424A Section B for a 5-year period of performance, you will need to submit the budget for the 5th year as an attachment. Use the SF-424A Section B. See Section 4.1.iv of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#).

Attachments 6 – 15: Other Relevant Documents OPTIONAL

Include here any other documents that are relevant to the application, including letters of support. Letters of support must be dated and specifically indicate a commitment to the project/program (in-kind services, dollars, staff, space, equipment, etc.). Include tables, charts, etc. to give further details about the proposed project (e.g., Gantt or PERT charts, flow charts).

3. Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management

You must obtain a valid DUNS number, also known as the Unique Entity Identifier, for your organization/agency and provide that number in the application. You must also register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and continue to maintain active SAM registration with current information at all times during which you have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by an agency (unless the applicant is an individual or federal agency that is exempted from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)).

HRSA may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time HRSA is ready to make an award, HRSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as the basis for making an award to another applicant.

If you have already completed Grants.gov registration for HRSA or another federal agency, confirm that the registration is still active and that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) has been approved.

The Grants.gov registration process requires information in three separate systems:

- Dun and Bradstreet (<http://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html>)
- System for Award Management (SAM) (<https://www.sam.gov>)
- Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov/>)

For further details, see Section 3.1 of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#).

UPDATED [SAM.GOV](#) ALERT: For your SAM.gov registration, you must submit a [notarized letter](#) appointing the authorized Entity Administrator. The review process changed for the Federal Assistance community on June 11, 2018. Read the [updated FAQs](#) to learn more.

[SAM.gov](#) is experiencing high volume and delays. If you have tried to create or update your SAM.gov registration but have not been able to complete the process, you may not be able to apply for a HRSA funding opportunity via Grants.gov in a timely manner prior to the application deadline. If so, please email DGPwaivers@hrsa.gov, per the instructions in Section 3.6 of your HRSA Application Guide.

If you fail to allow ample time to complete registration with SAM or Grants.gov, you will not be eligible for a deadline extension or waiver of the electronic submission requirement.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Application Due Date

The due date for applications under this NOFO is *February 28, 2019 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time*. HRSA suggests submitting applications to Grants.gov at least **3 days before the deadline** to allow for any unforeseen circumstances.

See Section 8.2.5 – Summary of emails from Grants.gov of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for additional information.

5. Intergovernmental Review

National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program is a program subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, as implemented by 45 CFR part 100. See Executive Order 12372 in the HHS Grants Policy Statement.

See Section 4.1 ii of HRSA’s SF-424 Application Guide for additional information.

6. Funding Restrictions

You may request funding for a period of performance of up to 5 years, at no more than \$2,300,000 per year (inclusive of direct **and** indirect costs). Awards to support projects beyond the first budget year will be contingent upon Congressional appropriation, satisfactory progress in meeting the project’s objectives, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government.

The General Provisions in Division B of the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 115-245) apply to this program. Please see Section 4.1 of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for additional information. Note that these or other restrictions will apply in the following FY, as required by law.

You cannot use funds under this notice for the following purposes:

- 1) Purchasing or improving real estate
- 2) Foreign travel

You are required to have the necessary policies, procedures and financial controls in place to ensure that your organization complies with all legal requirements and restrictions applicable to the receipt of federal funding including statutory restrictions on use of funds for lobbying, executive salaries, gun control, abortion, etc. Like those for all other applicable grants requirements, the effectiveness of these policies, procedures and controls is subject to audit.

All program income generated as a result of awarded funds must be used for approved project-related activities. The program income alternative applied to the award under the program will be the addition/additive alternative. You can find post-award requirements for program income at [45 CFR § 75.307](#).

V. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

HRSA has procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against which your application will be reviewed. HRSA has critical indicators for each review criterion to assist you in presenting pertinent information related to that criterion and to provide the reviewer with a standard for evaluation. See the review criteria outlined below with specific detail and scoring points.

These criteria are the basis upon which the reviewers will evaluate and score the merit of the application. The entire proposal will be considered during objective review.

Review criteria are used to review and rank applications. The National Rural Health Policy, Community, and Collaboration Program has six (6) review criteria:

Criterion 1: NEED (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Introduction and Needs Assessment

The reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which the application demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the issues facing rural communities at the national, regional, state and local levels.
- The extent to which the application describes a clear understanding of the purpose of this program as well as an understanding of the distinct unmet needs associated with identifying and educating stakeholders on policy issues, engaging rural communities, and collaborating with rural stakeholders.
- The extent the applicant clearly describes how the project will build upon the federally funded resources that currently exist, leveraging a broad network of rural health organizations and individual subject matter experts, and providing a mechanism for HRSA to engage with public rural health stakeholders beyond current award recipients and partners to add value, information, and support to rural communities.

Criterion 2: RESPONSE (30 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Methodology and Work Plan

Methodology (15 points)

The reviewers will consider the extent to which the application clearly demonstrates an approach to fulfilling the four objectives that include:

- (1) Identifying and educating rural stakeholders about national policy issues and promising practices for rural health.
- (2) Maintaining projects that will help support engagement of rural communities in a broad range of activities.
- (3) Facilitating partnerships and collaborations at the local, regional, State, and national levels to improve the exchange of information and promising practices that support rural health.
- (4) Identifying and promoting broader collaborative federal efforts to support, promote, and address unique rural health issues.

Work Plan (15 points)

The reviewers will consider the extent to which the application:

- Provides a detailed work plan that is logical and has objectives and goals that fulfill the purpose of this cooperative agreement and address identified needs.
- Clearly identifies responsible staff for each activity.
- Clearly identifies activities requiring collaboration with relevant partners.
- Provides a complete work plan matrix that represents the period of performance that includes goal(s), objective(s), and activities as they correlate with budget, personnel responsible, and timelines.
- Outlines a five (5) year period of performance explaining activities to begin August 1, 2019 and going no longer than July 31, 2024.

Criterion 3: EVALUATIVE MEASURES (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity

The reviewers will consider the extent to which the application:

- Provides an effective method to monitor and evaluate the project products, impact and outcomes.
- Clearly describes an evaluation plan that will contribute to continuous quality improvement.
- Clearly describes how the evaluative measures will be able to assess to what extent the program goals and objectives have been met.
- Clearly describes how quantitative and qualitative data will be used to capture program performance and impact.

Criterion 4: IMPACT (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Methodology

This includes the extent and effectiveness of plans for dissemination of project impact and/or the extent to which project impacts are national in scope and/or the degree to which the project activities are replicable, and/or the sustainability of the program beyond the period of federal funding.

Dissemination of Program Materials (3 points)

The reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which the applicant presents a plan for developing program materials that could be used by rural health entities.
- The extent to which the applicant presents a plan for disseminating program materials that could be used by rural health entities and policymakers.

Project Results are National in Scope (7 points)

The reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which the applicant has discussed a plan for including the partners and stakeholders that will be key to the success of this program.
- The extent to which the applicant describes previous rural health activities, which promote rural promising practices nationally.

Criterion 5: RESOURCES/CAPABILITIES (40 points) Corresponds to Section IV's Resolution of Challenges and Organizational Information

Organizational Capacity (10 points):

The reviewer will consider:

- The extent to which the applicant clearly describes the mission and structure of the organization, the scope of current activities and provides information on the mission and structure of the organization as well as an organizational chart.
- The extent to which the application clearly describes the capability of the organization to follow the proposed work plan, and properly account for the federal funds.
- The extent to which project personnel are qualified and have extensive experience to carry out all aspects of the project.
- The extent to which the application clearly provides the organization's capability to collaborate and existing relationships with appropriate partners to carry out all the program requirements.
- The extent to which the application includes letters of support/agreement from all proposed partners (**Attachment #3**).
- The extent to which the application clearly provides evidence of knowledge of HRSA rural health and other relevant programs in order to link stakeholders to appropriate resources and programs.

Organizational Expertise (15 points):

The reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which the application provides specific examples of related experience that highlights the applicant's proven ability to identify, educate, engage, and collaborate with rural stakeholders on national rural health policy issues and promising practices in order to support rural communities nationwide.
- The extent to which the applicant provides specific evidence of extensive organizational experience and success assisting with the development of strategies on a national level.

Collaboration with Partners (10 points)

The reviewers will consider the extent to which the application addresses:

- The clear demonstration of the applicant's commitment and ability to form collaborative long term relationships with key rural constituencies including: state-based entities, private foundations and philanthropic organizations, and other partners and subject matter experts, particularly those with expertise on topics such as workforce (e.g., recruitment and retention, community health workers/promotoras, etc.), agricultural health, telehealth, health disparities, rural health leadership and networking, and emerging areas of focus.
- The extent to which the application demonstrates the applicant organization's existing long term relationships with community-level stakeholders in the following constituency groups:
 - Federally Qualified Health Centers
 - Rural Health Clinics
 - Hospitals/Health Systems
 - Frontier Communities

- Public Health
- Research and Education
- State-Level Organizations/Resources
- Students
- Thorough demonstration of collaboration experience between federal partners or other applicable organizations in ways that support rural communities by leveraging federal partners beyond HRSA.

Resolution of Challenges (5 points)

The reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which the application clearly identifies and describes potential challenges and barriers that may be encountered along with approaches to resolving challenges in implementing program activities and attaining the project objectives.
- The extent to which the application clearly describes infrastructure that is in place that will assist in overcoming any potential barriers, and describes how.

Criterion 6: SUPPORT REQUESTED (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Budget and Budget Narrative

The reviewers will consider:

- The reasonableness of the proposed budget for each year of the period of performance in relation to the objectives, the complexity of the research activities, and the anticipated results.
- The extent to which costs, as outlined in the budget and required resources sections, are reasonable given the scope of work.
- The extent to which key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve project objectives.

2. Review and Selection Process

The independent review process provides an objective evaluation to the individuals responsible for making award decisions. The highest ranked applications receive consideration for award within available funding ranges. HRSA may also consider assessment of risk and the other pre-award activities described in Section 3 below.

See Section 5.3 of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for more details.

3. Assessment of Risk and Other Pre-Award Activities

HRSA may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial instability that directly relates to the organization’s ability to implement statutory, regulatory or other requirements ([45 CFR § 75.205](#)).

HRSA reviews applications receiving a favorable objective review for other considerations that include past performance, as applicable, cost analysis of the project/program budget, assessment of your management systems, ensuring continued applicant eligibility, and compliance with any public policy requirements, including those requiring just-in-time submissions. HRSA may ask you to submit additional programmatic or administrative information (such as an updated budget or “other

support” information) or to undertake certain activities (such as negotiation of an indirect cost rate) in anticipation of an award. However, even at this point in the process, such requests do not guarantee that HRSA will make an award. Following review of all applicable information, HRSA’s approving and business management officials will determine whether HRSA can make an award, if special conditions are required, and what level of funding is appropriate.

Award decisions are discretionary and are not subject to appeal to any HRSA or HHS official or board.

Effective January 1, 2016, HRSA is required to review and consider any information about your organization that is in the [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System \(FAPIS\)](#). You may review and comment on any information about your organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. HRSA will consider any of your comments, in addition to other information in [FAPIS](#) in making a judgment about your organization’s integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed as described in 45 CFR § 75.205 HHS Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.

HRSA will report to FAPIS a determination that an applicant is not qualified ([45 CFR § 75.212](#)).

4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

HRSA anticipates issuing/announcing awards prior to the start date of August 1, 2019.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

HRSA will issue the Notice of Award prior to the start date of August 1, 2019. See Section 5.4 of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#) for additional information.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See Section 2.1 of HRSA’s [SF-424 Application Guide](#).

Requirements of Subawards

The terms and conditions in the Notice of Award (NOA) apply directly to the recipient of HRSA funds. The recipient is accountable for the performance of the project, program, or activity; the appropriate expenditure of funds under the award by all parties; and all other obligations of the recipient, as cited in the NOA. In general, the requirements that apply to the recipient, including public policy requirements, also apply to subrecipients and contractors under grants, unless the NOA specifies an exception. See [45 CFR § 75.101 Applicability](#) for more details.

3. Reporting

Award recipients must comply with Section 6 of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#) and the following reporting and review activities:

- 1) **Progress Report(s)**. The recipient must submit a progress report to HRSA on an **annual** basis. Further information will be available in the award notice.
- 2) **Integrity and Performance Reporting**. The Notice of Award will contain a provision for integrity and performance reporting in [FAPIS](#), as required in [45 CFR part 75 Appendix XII](#).

VII. Agency Contacts

You may request additional information and/or technical assistance regarding business, administrative, or fiscal issues related to this NOFO by contacting:

Kimberly Dews
Grants Management Specialist
Division of Grants Management Operations, OFAM
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Mailstop 10NW04
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-0655
Email: kdews@hrsa.gov

You may request additional information regarding the overall program issues and/or technical assistance related to this NOFO by contacting:

Megan Meacham
Senior Advisor
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 17W44
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-8349
Email: mmeacham@hrsa.gov

You may need assistance when working online to submit your application forms electronically. Always obtain a case number when calling for support. For assistance with submitting the application in Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays at:

Grants.gov Contact Center
Telephone: 1-800-518-4726 (International Callers, please dial 606-545-5035)
Email: support@grants.gov
Self-Service Knowledge Base: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>

Successful applicants/recipients may need assistance when working online to submit information and reports electronically through HRSA's Electronic Handbooks (EHBs). For assistance with submitting information in HRSA's EHBs, contact the HRSA Contact Center, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays at:

HRSA Contact Center

Telephone: (877) 464-4772

TTY: (877) 897-9910

Web: <http://www.hrsa.gov/about/contact/ehbhelp.aspx>

VIII. Other Information

Technical Assistance

HRSA has scheduled following technical assistance webinar:

Day and Date: Monday, December 10, 2018

Time: 2 – 3 p.m. ET

Call-In Number: 1-800-369-3168

Participant Code: 2464074

Web link: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/fy19_nofu_hrsa-19-021/

Playback Number: 1-866-382-4790

Passcode: 8349

Tips for Writing a Strong Application

See Section 4.7 of HRSA's [SF-424 Application Guide](#).