

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Health Resources and Services Administration**

Bureau of Health Workforce
National Center for Health Workforce Analysis

***Health Workforce Research Center (HWRC)
Cooperative Agreement Program***

Announcement Type: New, Competing Continuation
Funding Opportunity Number: HRSA-17-062

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) No. 93.300

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Fiscal Year 2017

Application Due Date: January 20, 2017

*Ensure SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations and passwords are current immediately!
Deadline extensions are not granted for lack of registration.
Registration in all systems, including SAM.gov and Grants.gov,
may take up to one month to complete.*

Issuance Date: October 27, 2016

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Authority: Section 761(c) of the Public Health Services Act, as amended by Section 5103 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW), National Center for Health Workforce Analysis (NCHWA) is accepting applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Health Workforce Research Center (HWRC) Cooperative Agreement Program. The purpose of this program is to support and disseminate rigorous research that strengthens evidence-based policy and enhances understanding of issues and trends in the health workforce.

Funding Opportunity Title:	Health Workforce Research Center (HWRC) Cooperative Agreement Program
Funding Opportunity Number:	HRSA-17-062
Due Date for Applications:	January 20, 2017
Anticipated Total Annual Available Funding:	\$2,700,000
Estimated Number and Type of Award(s):	Up to 6 awards
Estimated Award Amount:	Up to \$450,000 per year
Cost Sharing/Match Required:	No
Project Period:	September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2022 (five (5) years)
Eligible Applicants:	Eligible applicants include: a State; a State workforce investment board; a public health or health professions school; an academic health center; or an appropriate public or private nonprofit entity. [See Section III-1 of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) 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 R&R Application Guide](http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424rrguidev2.pdf), available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424rrguidev2.pdf>, except where instructed in this FOA to do otherwise. A short video for applicants explaining the *Application Guide* is available at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/>.

Technical Assistance

A Technical Assistance Webinar will be held November 16, 2016 from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm ET.

Conference Call Number: 888-469-1762; Passcode: 3241485

Webinar ULR: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/hwra_2016foa_tawebinar/

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I. Program Funding Opportunity Description

1. Purpose

This announcement solicits applications for the Health Workforce Research Center (HWRC) Cooperative Agreement Program.

Program Purpose

Under Section 761(c) of the Public Health Service Act, as amended by Section 5103 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the purpose of the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program is to

- A. Collect, analyze, and report Title VII health workforce program data¹ to the National Center and to the public; and
- B. Provide technical assistance to local and regional entities on the collection, analysis, and reporting of health workforce data.

Through these efforts, the HWRC program supports and disseminates rigorous research that strengthens evidence-based policy and enhances government's and the public's understanding of issues and trends in the health workforce. In this way, HWRC projects help inform health workforce planning and policy at all levels.

Program Requirements

In addition to having expertise in one of the five topic areas listed in the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program Priorities section (below), HRSA anticipates that award recipients funded under this FOA will have expertise in the following:

- A comprehensive understanding of the current U.S. health workforce,
- Knowledge of health workforce data sets and research methods, and
- Expertise in areas that align with Bureau of Health Workforce's (BHW's) mission to improve the health of underserved and vulnerable populations by strengthening the health workforce and connecting skilled professionals to communities in need.

Successful applicants will demonstrate their expertise as well as the potential impact of their work through the publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals; presentations at national and international conferences and meetings; and publication of policy briefs, fact sheets, articles, blogs, etc. that are available in the public domain.

Program Priorities

Under this FOA, awards will provide support for the establishment of up to six (6) HWRCs, each with a specific topic area of concentration. Successful applicants will demonstrate particular expertise in one (1) of the following topic areas:

- (1) Allied health workforce

¹Health professions addressed by Title VII of the Public Health Service Act reflect a broad range of occupations and providers, including allied health (42USC§294e); behavioral health (42USC§294e-1); direct care (including workers employed in long-term care settings, home settings, and community based settings (42USC§293k-1)); geriatrics (42USC§294c); oral health (42USC§293k-2); palliative care (42USC§294i); and primary care (42USC§293k).

- (2) Long-term care support and services
- (3) Oral health workforce
- (4) Emerging health workforce topics related to the Public Health Service Act's Title VII programs. Examples of emerging topics include: the use of health information technology (HIT) by the health workforce to deliver care to underserved and rural communities (42USC§294b; 42USC§294d); Veterans entering allied health or related occupations (42USC§294e); workforce characteristics and competencies needed to provide care for special populations (e.g., the aging population (42USC§294e); Medicaid beneficiaries in underserved and rural communities (42USC§294b; 42USC§294d); dual eligible beneficiaries (individuals who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid benefits (42USC§294e)). Other emerging topic(s) may be suggested by the applicant.
- (5) Technical assistance (TA) to local and regional entities on the collection, analysis, and reporting of health workforce data.

Pending available funding, up to six (6) HWRC cooperative agreements will be awarded through this funding opportunity. In selecting which HWRC cooperative agreements to award, HRSA anticipates funding:

- Up to two (2) research HWRCs focusing on the allied health workforce (topic 1)
- Up to two (2) research HWRCs focusing on long-term care support and services (topic 2)
- Up to two (2) research HWRCs focusing on the oral health workforce (topic 3)
- Up to two (2) research HWRCs focusing on emerging health workforce topics (topic 4)
- Up to two (2) technical assistance (TA) HWRCs (topic 5)

To ensure that, collectively, the award recipients have the necessary expertise to cover the breadth of workforce issues, HRSA will consider the extent to which the applications address these topics.

2. Background

This program is authorized by Title VII of the Public Health Service Act, Section 761(c), as amended by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Section 5301. This program provides funding to eligible entities for the purposes of conducting and disseminating research on health workforce topics related to the Public Health Service Act's Title VII programs. Findings from HWRC-funded projects help inform health workforce planners and policy makers, the National Center, and other audiences interested in health workforce issues. The HWRCs are overseen by HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce, National Center for Health Workforce Analysis.

The mission of HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) is to improve the health of the nation's underserved communities and vulnerable populations by developing, implementing, evaluating, and refining programs that strengthen the nation's health workforce and connect skilled health professionals to communities in need. BHW programs holistically support a diverse, culturally competent workforce by addressing:

- Education and training;

- Recruitment and retention;
- Financial support for students, faculty, practitioners, and supporting institutions;
- Health workforce data collection and analysis; and
- Evaluation and coordination of health workforce activities.

These efforts support development and strengthening of a skilled health workforce serving in areas of greatest need across the nation.

The National Center for Health Workforce Analysis (NCHWA), a division within BHW, provides critical support for this mission by overseeing and participating in research and evaluation initiatives that help inform policy decisions related to the health workforce.

Currently, six HWRCs are funded through August 31, 2017. These six HWRCs include five research HWRCs and one National Technical Assistance HWRC.

Information about the work funded through the current HWRC cooperative agreements is publicly available via HRSA's Health Workforce Research Centers website: <http://bhw.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/researchcenters/index.html>.

II. Award Information

1. Type of Application and Award

Type(s) of applications sought: New and Competing Continuation

Funding will be provided in the form of a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement, as opposed to a grant, is an award instrument of financial assistance where substantial involvement is anticipated between HRSA and the recipient during performance of the funded work.

As a cooperative agreement, **HRSA Program involvement will include:**

- Participating in the planning and development of each HWRC's annual project portfolio and in the selection of each HWRC's annual projects.
- Reviewing, and, if necessary, commenting on each HWRC's project plans and methodologies presented in their project proposals.
- Reviewing each HWRC's work products, including each project's methodology, analysis, results, policy implications, format, and tone, prior to public dissemination.
- Hosting an annual meeting of the funded HWRCs.

- Participating, as appropriate, in any additional meetings (beyond the annual HWRC meetings), training activities, or workgroups conducted during the project period.
- Hosting quarterly conference calls with the HWRC Directors.
- Providing consultation, as appropriate, to each HWRC to design strategies for disseminating HWRC work in order to target multiple audiences interested in health workforce issues. Dissemination products may include policy briefs; peer-reviewed journal articles; invited presentations; responses to inquiries from health policy programs and health policy researchers; webinars; presentations at national, regional, state, and local conferences; and other appropriate vehicle(s) for sharing rigorous, policy-oriented research.

The cooperative agreement recipient's responsibilities will include:

- Adherence to HRSA requirements pertaining to acknowledgement and disclaimer on all products produced by HRSA award funds (Section VI.3.5 of this FOA).
- Submitting project proposals with relevant timelines and milestones to the NCHWA Project Officer for review.
- Participating in the planning and development of the HWRC's annual project portfolio and in the final selection of projects.
- Conducting health workforce projects, and synthesizing the results into reports or other work products developed for both technical and non-technical audiences.
- Preparing and submitting a 250-word abstract and a 2-page brief for each completed project *in addition to* the project's primary work product(s) (e.g., full policy brief, report, journal manuscript, monograph, etc.).
- Submitting project products (abstracts, 2-page briefs, full policy briefs, reports, manuscripts, monographs, etc.) for NCHWA review within 180 days of the end of each budget period.
- Publishing findings from HRSA-funded health workforce research and technical assistance in peer-reviewed journals.
- Posting completed work products to the HWRC's publicly available website. Note: In certain cases, exceptions may be made for posting peer-reviewed journal articles, if posting the article is prohibited by the journal.
- Responding to NCHWA comments, questions, and requests (including executing short-term, rapid-response qualitative or quantitative analyses to assist in answering health workforce planning and policy questions) within five to ten

business days. Note: The time line for responding to rapid response requests or other requests from NCHWA may be extended by NCHWA on a case by case basis.

- Designing and implementing strategies to disseminate the HWRC's projects to multiple audiences interested in health workforce issues. Dissemination products may include policy briefs; peer-reviewed journal articles; invited presentations; responses to inquiries from health policy programs and health policy researchers; webinars; presentations at national, regional, state, and local conferences; and other appropriate vehicle(s) for sharing rigorous, policy-oriented research.
- Implementing and maintaining a publicly available website with information about the award recipient's selected topic area, current projects funded under this cooperative agreement, and completed projects funded under this cooperative agreement. The recipient's website will also include the acknowledgement and disclaimer information required on all products supported by HRSA award funds.
- Attending and presenting at annual HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program meetings hosted by NCHWA at HRSA's headquarters in Rockville, Maryland.
- Participating in NCHWA-hosted quarterly conference calls with other HWRCs.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with other HRSA-funded HWRCs as well as with health workforce stakeholders.

2. Summary of Funding

This program expects to provide funding during federal fiscal years 2017 – 2021. Approximately \$2,700,00 is expected to be available annually to fund up to six (6) recipients. You may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$450,000 per year. The actual amount available will not be determined until enactment of the final FY 2017 federal budget. This program announcement is subject to the appropriation of funds, and this FOA is a contingency action taken to ensure that, should funds become available for this Program's purpose, applications can be processed, and funds can be awarded in a timely manner. The project period is September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2022 (five (5) years). Funding beyond the first budget year is dependent on the availability of appropriated funds for the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program in subsequent fiscal years, satisfactory recipient performance, and a decision that continued funding is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

Effective December 26, 2014, all administrative and audit requirements and the cost principles that govern federal monies associated with this award are subject to the Uniform Guidance, [2 CFR part 200](#), as codified by HHS at [45 CFR part 75](#), which supersede the previous administrative and audit requirements and cost principles that govern federal monies.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

An eligible applicant for the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program is a State, a State workforce investment board, a public health or health professions school, an academic health center, or an appropriate public or private nonprofit entity. Faith-based and community-based organizations, Tribes, and tribal organizations may apply for these funds, if otherwise eligible.

Foreign entities are not eligible for HRSA awards, unless the authorizing legislation specifically authorizes awards to foreign entities or the award is for research. This exception does not extend to research training awards or construction of research facilities.

2. Cost Sharing/Matching

Cost sharing/matching is not required for the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program.

3. Other

Ceiling Amount

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount of \$450,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Deadline

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements referenced in *Section IV.4* will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

Multiple Applications- NOTE: Multiple applications from an eligible organization are allowable. However, only one application per organization will be funded.

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.

You are reminded that failure to include all required documents as part of the application may result in an application being considered incomplete or non-responsive.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

HRSA **requires** applicants for this FOA to apply electronically through Grants.gov. You must download the SF-424 R&R application package associated with this FOA, following the directions provided at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

It is recommended that you supply an email address to Grants.gov when downloading a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) or application package. As noted on the Grants.gov APPLICATION PACKAGE download page, as well as in the Grants.gov User Guide, this allows HRSA to email organizations that supply an email address in the event the FOA is changed or republished on Grants.gov before its closing date. Responding to an earlier version of a modified announcement may result in a less competitive or ineligible application.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Section 4 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) provides instructions for the budget, budget justification, staffing plan, personnel requirements, assurances, certifications, and abstract. You must submit the information outlined in the [SF-424 R&R 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 R&R Application Guide](#) except where instructed in the FOA to do otherwise.

See Section 8.5 of the [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for the Application Completeness Checklist.

Application Page Limit

The total size of all uploaded files may not exceed the equivalent of **80 pages** when printed by HRSA. The page limit includes the abstract, project and budget narratives, attachments including biographical sketches (biosketches), and letters of commitment and support required in HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) and this FOA. Standard OMB-approved forms that are included in the application package are NOT included in the page limit (Reminder: Biographical Sketches **do** count in the page limit). Indirect Cost Rate Agreement and proof of non-profit status (if applicable) will not be counted 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 the announcement.

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) Where the prospective recipient is unable to attest to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective recipient shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

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

Program-Specific Instructions

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

i. Project Abstract

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

The Abstract must be clear, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The Abstract must also contain the following elements:

- Applicant's name
- Applicant's address
- Applicant's Selected Topic Area (from the topics listed in Section I.1 of this FOA)
- Principal Investigator (PI) information: Name, degree(s), email address, and phone number
- Contact person's name and email address, if different from the Principal Investigator
- Partner organizations, if applicable
- Applicant's web site address, if applicable
- A summary of the six (6) research studies or technical assistance initiatives proposed for Budget Year One

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.

Use the following section headers for the Narrative:

- ***PURPOSE AND NEED -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #1***
In the Purpose and Need section, applicants must identify one (1) Topic Area from the list of topic areas in Section I.1 as the focus of their HWRC Cooperative

Agreement Program activities. NCHWA expects that each cooperative agreement recipient will largely focus on their one (1) Selected Topic Area throughout the 5-year award cycle. NCHWA recognizes there may be overlap across topic areas, and overlaps will be addressed collaboratively, post award, between the successful applicant(s) and NCHWA.

In the Purpose and Need section, you must also demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the current state of the health workforce, as it relates to your Selected Topic Area, and you must clearly articulate issues and challenges associated with your Selected Topic Area.

- *RESPONSE TO PROGRAM PURPOSE -- This section includes 3 sub-sections — (a) Methodology/Approach; (b) Work Plan; and (c) Resolution of Challenges— which correspond to Section V's Review Criteria #2 (a), (b), and (c).*
- *METHODOLOGY/APPROACH -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 (a).*

In the Methodology/Approach section, each applicant must propose six (6) research studies or technical assistance initiatives for Budget Year One. From these six proposals, four (4) will be selected for completion by August 31, 2018.

Research Proposals: Applicants for Selected Topic Areas 1 through 4 (see list, Section I.1) must propose six (6) research questions and develop a proposal for each. Each research proposal must demonstrate a relevant planning or policy focus related to your Selected Topic Area.

Technical Assistance Proposals: Applicants for Selected Topic Area 5 (technical assistance; Section I.1) must propose six (6) initiatives that focus on providing technical assistance to national, regional, state, or local entities. Each technical assistance proposal must address a need related to health workforce data management, health workforce planning, or health workforce policy that is important or useful to health workforce planners and policy makers.

Both research proposals and technical assistance proposals for Budget Year One must also meet the following requirements:

- The proposed research studies or technical assistance initiatives must be related in nature and must inform each other.
- The proposed work must be reasonable and feasible to be completed within one year.
- The proposed work must not duplicate HWRC projects that are already underway or recently completed by currently funded HWRCs. Information on currently funded HWRC projects is available from:
<http://bhw.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/researchcenters/index.html>.

For research proposals only, the Budget Year One work must meet the following requirements:

- Four (4) of the six (6) proposed research studies must use a predominantly quantitative methodology.
- To ensure that the application review criteria (Section V.1) are applied uniformly to applications pertaining to the same Selected Topic Area (Section I.1), the proposed research studies must all be national in scope and cannot be single state or regional studies.

REMINDER: Both new and competing continuation applicants must propose work that is not duplicative of past HWRC projects or current HWRC work. However, applicants may propose work that builds on or updates previously funded HWRC work. In developing each proposal, please affirm that the proposed work is not duplicative of previous HWRC work and please indicate whether the proposed work builds on previous HWRC efforts or represents a new direction for HWRC research or technical assistance.

Post award, all projects will be defined collaboratively between the successful applicant(s) and NCHWA. This process may include additional input from NCHWA on possible alternative proposals and suggested proposal modifications.

Dependent on available funding in subsequent years, recipients will be required to propose additional research studies or technical assistance initiatives in Budget Year 2 through Budget Year 5. It is expected that these subsequent budget year efforts will build on the results of each recipient's Budget Year One work, so as to culminate in a comprehensive body of work and products.

State and regional studies may be considered in Budget Year Two through Budget Year Five.

You must present your six (6) Budget Year One proposals using the format outlined below. Limit each proposal to a maximum of two (2) pages total.

Proposal (maximum 2 pages total)

- Title
- Stand-alone, two-sentence description of the research study or technical assistance initiative
- Statement of purpose and program/policy relevance:
 - Describe the purpose of the proposed study or initiative.
 - Explain how the results can be used to inform programs and policies related to your Selected Topic Area.
- Design and analysis:²

² This information may not be applicable for technical assistance initiatives. Technical assistance applicants must describe the methods and activities they propose to use in carrying out their technical assistance initiatives. Technical assistance applicants must

- State the proposed study question(s) or study hypothesis(es).
- Describe the study design.
- Discuss the proposed approach for data analysis, and explain the rationale for selecting the proposed approach.
- Briefly discuss the limitations of the proposed methods.
- Data sources:
 - Identify proposed data sources.
 - If applicable, include information on data availability, cost, and schedule for obtaining and preparing the data for analysis.
 - For primary data: discuss the data collection plan, including sampling methods, estimated sample size, expected response rate, data collection schedule, etc.
 - For secondary data: describe your experience in accessing and using these data, and indicate whether utilization of the data will require a data use agreement or similar vehicle.
- Human subjects research: Provide answers to the questions below.
 - Are human subjects involved?
 - If activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project, indicate YES, even if the proposed work is exempt from Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects.
 - Indicate NO if no activities involving human subjects are planned.
 - If the answer is YES, indicate if the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review is pending or completed. If the IRB review has been completed and the work has been approved, provide the approval date.
 - If the proposed work is exempt from IRB approval, enter the exemption numbers and a short description corresponding to one or more of the exemption categories.
 - See <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/45-cfr-46/index.html#46.101> for a list of the six categories of research that qualify for exemption from coverage by the regulations as defined in the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects.
 - For the Human Subject Assurance Number, provide the IRB approval number or the approved Federal Wide Assurance (FWA), Multiple Project Assurance (MPA), Single Project Assurance (SPA) or Cooperative Project Assurance Number (CPA) that you have on file with the Office of Human Research Protections, if available.
 - If the study has not yet been reviewed by IRB and you believe the research is exempt, provide a justification for the exemption(s) with sufficient information about involvement of human subjects to allow a

address methods for collaborating with stakeholders, and the types of assistance (e.g., data development, data collection, data dissemination, data analysis, etc.) they propose to offer. If appropriate, you must include the development of effective tools and strategies for training, outreach, collaboration, communication, and dissemination.

tentative conclusion by HRSA staff that the claimed exemption(s) seem(s) appropriate.

REMINDER: Non-exempt research involving human subjects cannot be conducted under a Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sponsored award unless you provide verification of the justification for the research per HHS regulations. Documentation of IRB review when it is completed and its exemption or approval must be sent to the Project Officer. This IRB certification must include the grant number, title of the study, name of the appropriate IRB which has reviewed and exempted or approved the proposed activity, name of the principal investigator/program director, date of IRB exemption or approval, and appropriate signatures.

- (b) *WORK PLAN -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 (b).* Applicants must describe the activities or steps proposed to complete four (4) research studies or technical assistance initiatives per budget year as well as to complete up to four (4) Rapid Response Requests per budget year related to your Selected Topic Area.

REMINDER: In addition to conducting four (4) research studies or technical assistance initiatives related to your Selected Topic Area, applicants must also be able to respond to as many as four (4) Rapid Response Requests in each budget year on questions, issues, or trends related to your Selected Topic Area. Rapid Response Requests are generally small-scale tasks with a turnaround time of five (5) to ten (10) business days and are not to exceed five (5) percent staff time per request. Note: The time line for delivering products associated with rapid response requests may be extended by NCHWA on a case by case basis.

Applicants must include the following in their *Work Plan*:

- **Project Management Plan:** Applicants must include a Project Management Plan that will ensure that all work, including research studies/technical assistance initiatives and rapid response requests, stays on track throughout Budget Year One.
- **General Work Plan:** Applicants must include a General Work Plan for Budget Year 2 – Budget Year 5, which describes the budget line items. The General Work Plan does not need to include specific research studies or technical assistance initiatives that will be conducted during those years but must highlight activities that will span all five (5) years of the project period.
- **Quality Control Processes:** Applicants must describe their quality control processes, including an explanation of how they will ensure data quality and the quality of the products produced under this cooperative agreement.
- **Dissemination Plan:** Applicants must include a plan for disseminating products produced under this cooperative agreement. At a minimum, the Dissemination Plan must include:

- Anticipated products and venues for dissemination of completed work.
- Target audiences for the anticipated dissemination products.
- Methods for ensuring the dissemination products' quality and accessibility.
- Plans for publishing HWRC work in peer-reviewed journals.
- Development and maintenance of a website dedicated to the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program that will house your completed HWRC work. As part of developing and maintaining this website, applicants must:
 - Provide NCHWA with a link to your website.
 - Post completed HWRC products to your website, including links to abstracts or full manuscripts for all peer-reviewed journal articles that describe work funded by the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program.
 - Alert visitors to your website of new products related to your Selected Topic Area.
- *(c) RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 (c)*

Applicants must discuss any challenges (e.g., data availability, data cost, IRB approval, etc.) that they anticipate they are likely to encounter in designing and implementing the work proposed in the *Methodology Section*, as well as challenges they anticipate may be associated with performing the activities described in the *Work Plan Section*. Applicants must also describe the approaches they will use to address both sets of challenges.

- *IMPACT -- This section includes 2 sub-sections— (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity; and (b) Quality Improvement—which correspond to Section V's Review Criteria #3 (a) and #3 (b)*
- *(a) EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #3 (a)*
 This section must include the following:
 - Your plan for reporting the number of times that each product posted on your HWRC website is accessed or downloaded as well as a plan to track journal citations, conference presentations and posters, speaking engagements (including webinars), and press inquiries/communications.
 - Your plan for self-monitoring progress on each of the four (4) budget year research studies or technical assistance initiatives, as well as any Rapid Response Requests received during each budget year.

- *(b) QUALITY IMPROVEMENT -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #3 (b)*

This section must include the following:

- The corrective action processes that you will implement to address any concerns regarding the quality or accuracy of products completed under this cooperative agreement.

- *ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES-- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #4*

In this section, you must describe your expertise in health workforce research generally and in the Selected Topic Area (from the list of topic areas provided in Section I.1). Successful applicants must also demonstrate the capability and resources necessary to conduct and disseminate complex policy-relevant projects in a 12-month time period.

Applicants must provide both organizational information and a staffing plan, as described below:

- Organizational Information: You must describe how your organization has the ability to implement the proposed work and meet the requirements and expectations of the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program. You must also:
 - Provide information on your organization's current mission and structure, relevant experience, and current activities.
 - Describe your organizational capacity to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of your proposed work.
 - Include an HWRC organizational chart, as requested in Section IV.2.v, Attachment 1.
- Staffing Plan: Applicants must present a staffing plan that describes the education, experience, and rationale for the amount of time requested for each key staff member.
 - Key staff members are: the Principal Investigator; the Deputy Principal Investigator; and the Core Project Team.
 - The Principal Investigator and the Deputy Principal Investigator cannot be the same person.
 - Co-Principal Investigators are not permitted.
 - Principal Investigator requirements:
 - Devote at least 25 percent of his or her time to the HWRC.
 - Lead the development and realization of the HWRC's project portfolio.
 - Serve as the lead investigator on at least two (2) of your four (4) research studies or technical assistance initiatives in each budget year.
 - Have the ability and authority to review draft work products to assure their relevance, quality, and accessibility.
 - Responsible for the administrative aspects of the HWRC and the review of all draft products.

- Have at least five (5) years of work experience specific to health workforce research.
- Have at least five (5) peer-reviewed health workforce publications related to your Selected Topic Area.
- Have a doctoral degree.
- You must provide the following information for the Principal Investigator:
 - Experience, role, and responsibilities in managing research teams.
 - Experience, role, and responsibilities in conducting and disseminating policy-relevant health workforce research.
 - Experience informing/educating national, state, and community decision-makers, especially those concerned with health workforce issues.
 - A list of relevant articles that the Principal Investigator has published in peer-reviewed journals.
- Deputy Principal Investigator requirements:
 - Devote at least 20 percent of his/her time to the proposed HWRC.
 - Serve as the lead investigator on at least one (1) of your four (4) research studies or technical assistance initiatives in each budget year.
 - Have at least three (3) years of work experience specific to health workforce research.
- You must provide the following information for the Deputy Principal Investigator:
 - Experience, role, and responsibilities in conducting and disseminating policy-relevant health workforce research.
 - Experience informing/educating national, state, and community decision-makers, especially those concerned with health workforce issues.
 - Process through which the Deputy Principal Investigator would assume the duties of the Principal Investigator when the Principal Investigator is on short-term (e.g., vacation) and extended leave.
 - A list of relevant articles that the Deputy Principal Investigator has published in peer-reviewed journals.
- Core Project Team requirements:
 - The Core Project Team must be multi-disciplinary and have the educational and professional experience necessary to conduct the research studies or technical assistance initiatives proposed in the application. The Team may include individuals with clinical or nonclinical backgrounds in relevant disciplines (e.g., biostatistics, demography, economics, epidemiology, geography, political science, public affairs, public health, sociology, statistics, etc.).

- You must provide the following information for the Core Project Team:
 - An explanation of how the disciplines of the Core Project Team relate to your Selected Topic Area.
 - A discussion of how the experience of the Core Project Team supports the implementation and execution of your proposed work, and the successful dissemination of HWRC-related products in peer-reviewed journals and other forums.
 - A list of relevant articles that Core Project Team members have published in peer-reviewed journals.

OPTIONAL: Expert Work Group (EWG)

You may choose to appoint and convene an Expert Work Group (EWG) comprised of up to five national and regional experts in your Selected Topic Area. The EWG may meet with the award recipient virtually or in person. However, no more than \$7,000 of the annual HWRC budget may be spent on this activity (including travel, per diem, and honorarium). Note: The EWG is not a requirement. HRSA leaves it to each applicant's discretion as to whether an EWG will strengthen their HWRC project portfolio.

OPTIONAL: Editor, Technical Writer, Website Developer, Social Media Specialist, etc.

You may include an editor, technical writer, website developer, social media specialist or other staff member(s) whose main/partial responsibility will be to review draft products to ensure high quality and accessibility. This(ese) individual(s) should be identified in your line item budget. Note: These positions are not requirements. HRSA leaves it to each applicant's discretion as to whether such staff will strengthen their HWRC products.

REQUIRED: POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND STAFF LOADING CHART

Position descriptions for key staff members must be included in **Attachment 2**. You must also include a staff loading chart that presents the number of hours or Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) devoted to the proposed HWRC for each key staff member (Principal Investigator, Deputy Principal Investigator, and Core Project Team), and the total number of hours or FTEs for all staff members (**Attachment 3**).

REQUIRED: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Biographical Sketches must be uploaded in the SF-424 RESEARCH & RELATED Senior/Key Person Profile form. This form can be accessed in the Application Package under "Mandatory."

Biographical Sketches are required for the Principal Investigator, the Deputy Principal Investigator, and each member of the Core Project Team. In the event that a Biographical Sketch is included for an individual who is not yet hired, you must include a letter of commitment from that person, as requested in Section IV.2.v, Attachment 4.

Biographical Sketches, not exceeding two pages per person, should include the following information:

- Senior/key personnel name
- Position Title
- Education/Training - beginning with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, including postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable:
 - Institution and location
 - Degree (if applicable)
 - Date of degree (MM/YY)
 - Field of study
- Section A (*required*): **Personal Statement.** Briefly describe why the individual's experience and qualifications make them particularly well-suited for their role (e.g., PD/PI) in the project that is the subject of the award.
- Section B (*required*): **Positions and Honors.** List previous positions in reverse chronological order, beginning with the present position. List any honors. Include present membership on any Federal Government public advisory committee.
- Section C (*optional*): **Peer-reviewed publications or manuscripts in press (in chronological order).** You are encouraged to limit the list of selected peer-reviewed publications or manuscripts in press to no more than 15. Do not include manuscripts that are in preparation or manuscripts that have been submitted to a journal but have not been accepted or have not yet been published. The individual may choose to include selected publications based on date, importance to the field, and/or relevance to the proposed research. Citations that are publicly available in a free online format may include URLs along with the full reference (note that copies of publicly available publications are not acceptable as appendix material).
- Section D (*optional*): **Other Support.** List both selected ongoing and completed (during the last three years) projects (Federal or non-Federal support). Begin with any projects relevant to the project proposed in this application. Briefly indicate the overall goals of the projects and responsibilities of the Senior/Key Person identified on the Biographical Sketch.

NARRATIVE GUIDANCE	
In order to ensure that the Review Criteria are fully addressed, 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>
Purpose and Need	(1) Purpose and Need
Response to Program Purpose: (a) Methodology/Approach (b) Work Plan (c) Resolution of Challenges	(2) Response to Program Purpose: (a) Methodology/Approach (b) Work Plan (c) Resolution of Challenges
Impact: (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity (b) Quality Improvement	(3) Impact: (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity (b) Quality Improvement
Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities	(4) Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities
Budget and Budget Justification Narrative	(5) Support Requested: The budget section should include sufficient justification to allow reviewers to determine the reasonableness of the requested support

iii. Budget

See Section 4.1.iv of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). Note: The directions offered in the [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) may differ from those offered by Grants.gov. Please follow the instructions included the *R&R Application Guide* and, *if applicable*, the additional budget instructions provided below.

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.

In addition to the budget instructions in the [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#), the Health Workforce Research Center Cooperative Agreement Program requires the following which correspond to Section V's Review Criterion #5:

- The maximum annual budget for this cooperative agreement is up to \$450,000 per budget year. Since only four of the six proposals per successful applicant will be selected by NCHWA, you should, to the best of your ability, submit a budget where any combination of four of the six proposals would not exceed

the ceiling. You should bear in mind that over the course of the award, you may be required to respond to rapid response requests. NCHWA will work collaboratively with successful applicants post award to address any budget issues that arise during the proposal selection process. Successful applicants may be asked to submit individual budgets for each proposal post award to aid in this process.

- No more than \$7,000 of the annual budget may be spent on the optional Expert Work Group (EWG), including travel for up to five people, per diem, and honorarium.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Division H, § 202, (P.L. 114-113) 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.” Please see Section 4.1.iv Budget – Salary Limitation of HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for additional information. Note: These or other salary limitations may apply in FY 2017, as required by law.

iv. Budget Justification Narrative

See Section 4.1.v. of HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). In addition, the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program requires the following, which also corresponds to Section V’s Review Criterion #5:

- HRSA understands that individual research studies and technical assistance initiatives will vary in terms of their budgets and that this may impact applicants’ overall budgets. Applicants should attempt to create budgets that will be reasonable, that will allow for the necessary variation across proposed research studies or technical assistance initiatives, and that will not exceed the expected award amount of up to \$450,000.

Consultant Services: for applicants that are using consultant services, list the total costs for all consultant services. In the budget justification, identify each consultant, the services he/she will perform, the total number of days, travel costs, and the total estimated costs.

v. Attachments

See Section 4.1.v. of HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). Provide the following items in the order specified 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. **Each attachment must be clearly labeled.**

Attachment 1: HWRC Organizational Chart

Provide a one-page figure that depicts the organizational structure of *the HWRC team* (not the applicant organization).

Attachment 2: Position Descriptions for Key Personnel

See Section 4.1.vi. of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for required information. Keep each job description to no more than one (1) page in length. For each position description, describe the individual's role, responsibilities, and qualifications.

Attachment 3: Staff Loading Chart

Attachment 4: Letters of Agreement, Letters of Commitment, and/or Description(s) of Proposed/Existing Contracts (project-specific)

Provide any documents that describe working relationships between your organization and other entities or programs cited in the application. Documents that confirm actual or pending contractual agreements should clearly describe the roles of the contractors and any deliverable. Letters of Agreement and Letters of Commitment must be dated.

Attachment 5: Tables, Charts, etc.

Include any tables, charts, etc. that support the application (e.g., Gantt or PERT charts, flow charts, etc.).

Attachment 6 Summary Progress Report

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARY (FOR COMPETING CONTINUATION APPLICANTS ONLY)

The accomplishments of competing continuation applicants are carefully considered during the review process. Therefore, competing continuation applicants are advised to include previously stated goals and objectives in their application and to emphasize the progress made in attaining these goals and objectives. Competing continuation applicants include all HRSA award recipients currently funded under the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program (Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 93.300).

Because the Accomplishment Summary is considered when applications are reviewed and scored, **competing continuation applicants who do not include an Accomplishment Summary may not receive as high a score as competing continuation applicants who do.** The Accomplishment Summary will be evaluated as part of Review Criterion 4: Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities.

The Accomplishment Summary must include a brief discussion of the competing continuation applicant's accomplishments during the previous grant cycle (September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2017), including

- A list of the competing continuation applicant's successfully completed HWRC research studies or technical assistance initiatives by funding year.
- A list of peer-reviewed publications relating to the competing continuation applicant's completed HWRC work.

- The status of the competing continuation applicant's incomplete HWRC research studies or technical assistance initiatives, including:
 - Year funded
 - Work completed during each of the budget years since the HWRC research study or technical assistance initiative was funded
 - Barriers to progress and steps taken to overcome the barriers
 - Realistic timeline for completion of the study or initiative, including major milestones
 - Presentations or peer-reviewed publications based on partially completed work
- A short summary of the positive contributions to the field of health workforce research as a result of previous HWRC funding.

Attachments 7: Other Relevant Documents

Include here any other document(s) that are relevant to the application.

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 R&R Application Guide*](#).

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

4. Submission Date and Time

Application Due Date

The due date for applications under this FOA is *January 20, 2017* at 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time.

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

5. Intergovernmental Review

The Health Workforce Research Center Cooperative Agreement Program is not a program subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, as implemented by 45 CFR part 100.

See Section 4.1 ii of HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for additional information.

6. Funding Restrictions

You may request funding for a project period of up to five (5) years, at no more than \$450,000 per year, in total costs (direct and indirect). Awards to support work beyond the first budget year will be contingent upon Congressional appropriation, satisfactory recipient performance, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government.

Funds under this announcement may not be used for purposes specified in HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#).

The General Provisions in Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113) apply to this program. Please see Section 4.1 of HRSA’s [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for additional information. Note that these or other restrictions will apply in FY 2017, as required by law.

You are required to have the necessary policies, procedures and financial controls in place to ensure that your organization complies with the all federal funding requirements and prohibitions such as lobbying, gun control, abortion, etc. 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.

V. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

Procedures for assessing the technical merit of applications have been instituted to provide for an objective review of applications and to assist you in understanding the standards against which your application will be judged. Critical indicators have been developed 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. Review criteria are outlined below with specific detail and scoring points.

These criteria are the basis upon which the reviewers will evaluate the application. The entire application will be considered during objective review.

Review criteria are used to review and rank applications. The HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program has five (5) review criteria:

Criterion 1: PURPOSE AND NEED (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Purpose and Need

- The extent to which the application demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of your Selected Topic Area, either through research background, subject matter expertise, or other means. Topic areas are listed in Section I.1 of this FOA. (5 points)
- The strength of the application in clearly articulating issues and challenges associated with your Selected Topic Area. (5 points)

Criterion 2: RESPONSE TO PROGRAM PURPOSE (45 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Response to Program Purpose Sub-Section (a) Methodology/Approach, Sub-Section (b) Work Plan, and Sub-Section (c) Resolution of Challenges

Criterion 2 (a): METHODOLOGY/APPROACH (25 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Sub-Section (a) Methodology/Approach

- The extent to which the proposed research studies or technical assistance initiatives display an understanding of the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program requirements and BHW's mission. (2 points)
- The extent to which the proposed research studies or technical assistance initiatives demonstrate a strong understanding of available health workforce data sources, recent health workforce research, and current health workforce policies, as these relate to your Selected Topic Area. (5 points)
- The extent to which the proposed research studies or technical assistance initiatives address current needs or gaps in the current health workforce landscape, as these relate to your Selected Topic Area. (6 points)
- The extent to which the application provides a logical description of all proposed activities. (4 points)

Additional criteria for applicants proposing research studies related to Topic Areas 1 - 4:

- The extent to which the six (6) research study proposals are feasible and methodologically sound, including the extent to which the proposed methodologies are appropriate to the studies' hypotheses. (3 points)
- The extent to which the six (6) research study proposals are appropriately detailed, including information describing the study hypotheses, study designs, approaches to data analyses, and Human Subjects Research requirements. (3 points)
- The extent to which at least four (4) of the six (6) proposed research studies use quantitative methodologies. (2 points)

Additional criteria for applicants proposing technical assistance initiatives (Topic Area 5):

- The extent to which the six (6) technical assistance initiative proposals are feasible and methodologically sound. (6 points)
- The extent to which the six (6) technical assistance initiative proposals are appropriately detailed. (2 points)

Criterion 2 (b): WORK PLAN (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Sub-Section (b) Work Plan

- The extent to which your Project Management Plan and General Work Plan demonstrate your ability to effectively manage the HWRC work load (including projects and rapid response requests) and ensure that HWRC products are delivered in a timely manner over the course of the five (5) year project period. (2 points)
- The strength of your processes for ensuring data quality and the quality of products produced under this cooperative agreement. (4 points)
- The extent to which your strategy for disseminating findings and information pertaining to the health workforce is reasonable, feasible and likely to reach multiple types of health workforce stakeholders and audiences. (4 points)

Criterion 2 (c): RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Sub-Section (c) Resolution of Challenges

- The extent to which the application demonstrates an understanding of potential obstacles and challenges that may arise during the design and implementation of the proposed Budget Year One work. (3 points)
- The strength of your approaches for dealing with identified contingencies that may arise during Budget Year One. (3 points)
- The extent to which the application demonstrates an understanding of potential obstacles and challenges that may arise over the course of the five (5) year project period. (2 points)
- The strength of your approaches for dealing with identified contingencies that may arise during the five (5) year project period. (2 points)

Criterion 3: IMPACT (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Impact Sub-Section (a) Evaluation, and Sub-Section (b) Quality Improvement

Criterion 3(a): EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY (7 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii – Sub-Section (a) Evaluation

- The extent to which the proposed work can help inform health workforce programs and policies related to your Selected Topic Area. (3 points)
- The extent to which you provide a clear and reasonable plan to assess the impact of work funded under this cooperative agreement. (2 points)
- The strength of your approach for self-monitoring progress on the four approved research studies or technical assistance initiatives, together with any Rapid Response Requests, that are required to be completed in each budget year. (2 points)

Criterion 3(b): QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (3 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii – Sub-Section (b) Quality Improvement

- The strength of the corrective action processes that you will implement to address any concerns regarding the quality or accuracy of products completed under this cooperative agreement. (3 points)

Criterion 4: ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION, RESOURCES and CAPABILITIES (25 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.ii: Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities

- Organizational Information: The extent to which the application describes your current organizational mission and structure, and explains how the current organizational capabilities will contribute to your ability to meet HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program requirements. (3 points)
- Resources: The extent to which your resources are sufficient to support the HWRC Cooperative Program activities. Specifically:
 - The extent to which: (a) the application describes the roles, responsibilities, and organizational lines of duty for the Principal Investigator and Deputy Principal Investigator to ensure that products will be of high quality and will be completed on schedule; (b) the staff loading chart indicates that sufficient Core Project Team staff of appropriate expertise are assigned to ensure the timely completion of high quality products; and (c) the application describes how you will have the appropriate staff (including Principal Investigator, Deputy Principal Investigator, and Core Project Team) available to respond to Rapid Response Requests that may involve short-term qualitative or quantitative analysis within five (5) to ten (10) business days. (3 points)
 - The extent to which you describe your demonstrated capability to conduct and disseminate complex, policy-relevant health workforce information, including the design and maintenance of a dedicated HWRC website. (2 points)
- Capabilities: The extent to which the Principal Investigator, Deputy Principal Investigator, and Core Project Team are qualified by their education and experience to implement and carry out the proposed work in your Selected Topic Area.

- For the Principal Investigator:
 - The extent to which the Principal Investigator has appropriate education and substantive experience relevant to your Selected Topic Area. Substantive experience for the Principal Investigator includes conducting and disseminating policy-relevant health workforce research, as evidenced by at least five (5) years of health workforce research work experience; publication of at least five (5) peer-reviewed journal articles related to your Selected Topic Area; preparation of health workforce policy briefs; and presentations at national health workforce conferences. (2 points)
 - The availability of the Principal Investigator and the extent to which the Principal Investigator will devote at least 25 percent of a full time equivalent (FTE) to work that is related to the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program. (2 points)
 - The extent to the Principal Investigator: (a) has experience in managing teams of researchers and the authority to supervise the Deputy Principal Investigator and the Core Project Team, including staff located in other parts of your organization; and (b) has the responsibility and authority to review draft reports before their submission to HRSA. (2 points)
- For the Deputy Principal Investigator:
 - The extent to which the Deputy Principal Investigator has appropriate education and substantive experience relevant to your Selected Topic Area. Substantive experience for the Deputy Principal Investigator includes conducting and disseminating policy-relevant health workforce research, as evidenced by at least three (3) years of health workforce research work experience; peer-reviewed journal articles related to your Selected Topic Area; preparation of health workforce policy briefs; and presentations at national health workforce conferences. (2 points)
 - The availability of the Deputy Principal Investigator and the extent to which the Deputy Principal Investigator will devote at least 20 percent of an FTE to work that is related to the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program, as well as the extent to which the application describes a viable approach for the Deputy Principal Investigator to manage the HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program activities when the Principal Investigator is on short-term or extended leave. (2 points)
- For the Core Project team:
 - The extent to which the multi-disciplinary mix of the Core Project Team is appropriate and their education and substantive experience support your Selected Topic Area. Substantive experience for the Core Project Team members includes conducting and disseminating policy-relevant health workforce research, as evidenced by publication of peer-reviewed journal

articles; preparation of health workforce policy briefs; and presentations at national health workforce conferences. (2 points)

- IF APPLICABLE: Applicants who submit Competing Continuation proposals will also be evaluated based on the extent to which you have successfully executed your previously funded HWRC Cooperative Agreement Program work, as described in Attachment 6 – Summary Progress Report/Accomplishment Report. (5 Points)
- IF APPLICABLE: Applicants who submit New proposals will also be evaluated on the extent to which you have successfully executed comparable health workforce research or technical assistance. (5 points)

Criterion 5: SUPPORT REQUESTED (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV.2.iii: Budget, Section IV.2.iv: Budget Justification Narrative, and SF-424 R&R budget forms

- The reasonableness of your proposed budget for each budget year of the five (5) year project period, in relation to the objectives, the complexity of the activities, and the anticipated work products described in the application. This includes the extent to which costs, as outlined in the budget and required resources sections, are reasonable and allowable, given the scope of work described in the application. (5 points)
- Strength of the budget justification that documents logically and in adequate detail how and why each line item request (e.g., personnel, travel, equipment, supplies, etc.) supports the objectives and activities described in the application. (5 points)

2. Review and Selection Process

The objective review provides advice to the individuals responsible for making award decisions. The highest ranked applications receive priority consideration for award within available funding. In addition to the ranking based on merit criteria, HRSA approving officials also may apply other factors in award selection, if specified below in this FOA. HRSA may also consider assessment of risk and the other pre-award activities described in Section V.3 below.

Please see Section 5.3 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for more details.

3. Assessment of Risk and Other Pre-Award Activities

The Health Resources and Services Administration 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](#)).

Applications receiving a favorable objective review that HRSA is considering for funding are reviewed for other considerations. These include, 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. You may be asked to submit additional

programmatic or grants 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 an award will be made. Following review of all applicable information, the HRSA approving and business management officials will determine whether an award can be made, 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 the applicant that is in the [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System \(FAPIIS\)](#). An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered. HRSA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in [FAPIIS](#) in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in [45 CFR § 75.205 HHS Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants](#).

A determination that an applicant is not qualified will be reported by HRSA to FAPIIS ([45 CFR § 75.212](#)).

4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

HRSA anticipates issuing/announcing awards prior to the start date of September 1, 2017.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

HRSA will issue the Notice of Award prior to the start date of September 1, 2017. See Section 5.4 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for additional information.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See Section 2 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#).

Human Subjects Protection:

Federal regulations (45 CFR part 46) require that applications and proposals involving human subjects must be evaluated with reference to the risks to the subjects, the adequacy of protection against these risks, the potential benefits of the research to the subjects and others, and the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained. If

research involving human subjects is anticipated, recipients must meet the requirements of the HHS regulations to protect human subjects from research risks as specified in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45 – Public Welfare, Part 46 – Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR part 46), available online at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html>.

3. Reporting

The successful applicant under this FOA must comply with Section 6 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R 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. The Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) will verify that approved and funded applicants' proposed objectives are accomplished during each year of the project.

The BHW Progress Report has two parts. The first part demonstrates recipient progress on program-specific goals. Recipients will provide performance information on project objectives, accomplishments, project barriers, and resolutions, and will identify any technical assistance needs.

The second part collects information providing a comprehensive overview of recipient overall progress in meeting the approved and funded objectives of the cooperative agreement, as well as plans for continuation of the work in the coming budget period. The recipient should also plan to report on dissemination activities in the annual progress report.

Further information will be provided in the Notice of Award (NoA).

2) **Performance Reports.** The recipient must submit a Performance Report to HRSA via the Electronic Handbooks (EHBs) on an annual basis. All BHW award recipients are required to collect and report performance data so that HRSA can meet its obligations under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRA). The required performance measures for this program are outlined in the Narrative's Impact, Evaluation, and Quality Improvement Section (Section IV.2.ii). Further information will be provided in the NoA.

The annual performance report will include all activities from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 and will be due to HRSA on July 31, 2018.

3) **Final Report.** A final report is due within 90 days after the project period ends. The Final Report must be submitted online by recipients in the Electronic Handbook (EHB) system at <https://grants.hrsa.gov/webexternal/home.asp>.

The Final Report is designed to provide BHW with information required to close out a grant after completion of project activities. Every recipient is required to submit a final report at the end of their project. The Final Report includes the following sections:

- Project Objectives and Accomplishments - Description of major accomplishments on project objectives.
- Project Barriers and Resolutions - Description of barriers/problems that impeded project's ability to implement the approved plan.
- Summary Information:
 - Project overview.
 - Project impact.
 - Prospects for continuing the project and/or replicating this project elsewhere.
 - Publications produced through this grant activity.
 - Changes to the objectives from the initially approved grant.

Further information will be provided in the NoA.

4) **Federal Financial Report.** A Federal Financial Report SF-425 is required according to the schedule in the [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). The report is an accounting of expenditures under the project that year. Financial reports must be submitted electronically through the EHB system. More specific information will be included in the NoA.

5) **Attribution.** You are required to use the following acknowledgement and disclaimer on all products produced by HRSA grant funds:

“This project is/was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number and title for grant amount (specify grant number, title, total award amount, and, if applicable, the percentage financed with nongovernmental sources). This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.”

Recipients are required to use this language when issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other HRSA supported publications and forums describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with HRSA funding, including websites. Examples of HRSA-supported publications include, but are not limited to, manuals, toolkits, resource guides, case studies and issues briefs.

6) Other required reports or products:

Proposals. Pending available funding, the award recipient will be required to submit between four (4) and six (6) two-page research study or technical assistance initiative proposals to NCHWA for deliberation for each noncompetitive year (Budget Year 2 through Budget Year 5). NCHWA will then discuss which proposals meet its expectations.

Briefs/Reports. The award recipient will be required to submit a comprehensive brief or report for each research study or technical assistance initiative to the Project Officer no later than 90 days after the end of each budget year. If the recipient is aware that it is not likely to meet this deadline, the award recipient must explain the reasons for the delay to the Project Officer by email, as well as provide a strategy for finalizing and submitting the brief(s)/report(s) as soon as possible.

For each brief/report, the award recipient will also be required to submit a short abstract (250 words or less) and a two-page brief summarizing the work. The abstract and two-page brief are required to be submitted in addition to the full brief or report described in the preceding paragraph. NCHWA will provide templates for the abstract and two-page brief to each award recipient following award.

All products submitted to BHW for review must be submitted in a Word Document compatible with Track Changes to allow for efficient and effective review. PDF versions for review are not acceptable except for final publication to the recipient's website. HWRCs are required to work collaboratively with HRSA to come to a resolution on all editorial comments. HWRCs must submit at the end of each budget year an electronic compendium of all abstracts, briefs, reports, and manuscripts (one copy per project) to the HRSA Project Officer.

Rapid Response Requests. The award recipient will be required to respond to Rapid Response Requests via a variety of products that may include policy briefs, reports, and memoranda, among others. Deadline for responses will be provided by the HRSA Project Officer and will usually range from five to ten business days from the date of request.

Publications. The award recipient may submit findings from HWRC research studies and technical assistance initiatives to peer-reviewed journals for publication under the following conditions:

- The attribution statement specified in Section VI.3.5 (above) must be included in every publication.
- **NCHWA will allow the award recipient to defer publication of information to the award recipient's website of only one research study or technical assistance initiative per budget year, and only in the case where: (1) a recipient intends to submit a manuscript related to that**

work to a peer-reviewed journal, and (2) the delay is caused by the journal's peer review and acceptance policies.

- In these cases, NCHWA will allow the award recipient twelve additional months to complete the journal publication process for this one specific research study or technical assistance initiative.
- If the research study or technical assistance initiative is not accepted for publication within the twelve-month time frame, the award recipient must submit it promptly (i.e., within one month) for publication on the recipient's website.
- The award recipient may submit one or more of the remaining three budget year research studies or technical assistance initiatives for journal publication, but these briefs/reports must be posted immediately upon their completion and approval by NCHWA. No delay caused by the journal publication process will be allowed to impede publication on the recipient's website for the remaining three briefs or reports.

VII. Agency Contacts

You may obtain additional information regarding business, administrative, or fiscal issues related to this FOA by contacting:

Gerly Sapphire Marc-Harris
Grants Management Specialist
HRSA Division of Grants Management Operations
Office of Federal Assistance Management (OFAM)
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane , Room 10NWH04
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-2628
Fax: (301) 443-6343
Email: Smarc-harris@hrsa.gov

Additional information related to the overall program issues and/or technical assistance regarding this funding announcement may be obtained by contacting:

Arpita Chattopadhyay, Ph.D.
Branch Chief, Workforce Analysis Branch
Attn: National Center for Health Workforce Analysis
Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane , Room 11N23
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-2573
Fax: (301) 443-6380
Email: AChattopadhyay@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, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 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:

A Technical Assistance Webinar is scheduled to help applicants understand, prepare, and submit an application. Details of this webinar are below:

Technical Assistance Webinar: November 16, 2016 from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm ET.
To participate in the call, please use the following link:

Webinar URL: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/hwra_2016foa_tawebinar/

Conference Call Number: 888-469-1762; Passcode: 3241485

General questions may be submitted in advance to Arpita Chattopadhyay (AChattopadhyay@hrsa.gov). Questions received before November 16, 2016 will be addressed on the Technical Assistance Webinar.

Helpful Websites:

For HRSA:

<http://www.hrsa.gov/index.html>

For BHW:

<http://bhw.hrsa.gov/index.html>

For NCHWA:

<http://bhw.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/index.html>

For currently funded HWRCs:

<http://bhw.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/researchcenters/index.html>

IX. Tips for Writing a Strong Application

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

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) can be found on the program website, and are often updated during the application process.

In addition, HRSA has developed a number of resources with information that may assist applicants in preparing a competitive application. These resources can be accessed at: <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/writestrong/>.