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

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Policy Research Division

Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement

Announcement Type: New, Competing Continuation
Funding Opportunity Number: HRSA-17-002

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) No. 93.155

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Fiscal Year 2017

Application Due Date: December 14, 2016

Ensure your 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: September 2, 2016

Sarah Bryce
Research Coordinator
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
E-mail: sbryce@hrsa.gov
Telephone: (301) 443-5982
Fax: (301) 443-2803

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) is accepting applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement. The purpose of this program is to disseminate and market FORHP funded rural health services research to diverse audiences, such as decision makers and rural stakeholders at national, state, and community levels, with the goal of informing and raising awareness of key policy issues important to rural communities.

Funding Opportunity Title:	Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number:	HRSA-17-002
Due Date for Applications:	December 14, 2016
Anticipated Total Annual Available Funding:	$135,000
Estimated Number and Type of Award(s):	Up to 1 cooperative agreement
Estimated Award Amount:	Up to $135,000 per year
Cost Sharing/Match Required:	No
Project Period:	July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2021 (four (4) years)
Eligible Applicants:	Eligible applicants include public and non-profit entities. Faith-based and community-based organizations, Tribes, and tribal organizations are eligible to apply. [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* Research and Related (*R&R) Application Guide,* available online at http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424rrguide.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/

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I. Program Funding Opportunity Description

1. Purpose

This announcement solicits applications for the Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement. The purpose of this program is to disseminate and market rural health services research funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) to diverse audiences, such as decision makers and rural stakeholders at national, state, and community levels, with the goal of informing and raising awareness of key policy issues important to rural communities. FORHP primarily funds health services research through our Rural Health Research Center (RHRC) cooperative agreement. The successful applicant for this program will develop and maintain a website which includes the entire body of research funded by FORHP and allows that research to be easily and freely accessible to the public. The successful applicant will also develop and maintain strategies to effectively disseminate this research through a variety of mechanisms including (but not limited to) a listserv, social media accounts, presentations and exhibits at national conferences, and webinars.

2. Background

This program is authorized by Section 711(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 912(b)), as amended. The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy 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 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. FORHP accomplishes this mission through a broad range of policy and program activities, including the RHRC cooperative agreement. For additional information about FORHP, please see http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/index.html.

The RHRC cooperative agreement funds eight research centers to produce policy relevant health services research on issues of nation-wide importance to rural areas. The research is intended to assist providers and decision-makers at the Federal, State and local levels to better understand problems faced by rural communities and provide information that will improve access to health care and population health. Each RHRC conducts four research projects per year and the program in aggregate produces a minimum of approximately 32 research products (policy briefs, chartbooks and/or journal articles) per year. Each RHRC is responsible for releasing their own research products on their own websites. The role of the Rural Health Research Dissemination awardee is to disseminate and increase awareness of the RHRC's FORHP funded publications and products to diverse public audiences concerned with a variety of key rural health issues.

II. Award Information

1. Type of Application and Award

Type(s) of applications sought: New, 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 contemplated project.

As a cooperative agreement, **HRSA Program involvement will include**:
- Providing input on dissemination strategies and selection of publications/products for distribution including target audiences for dissemination;
- Assuring the timely cooperation of the RHRCs in responding to information requests by the awardee;
- Providing input into the decisions on content, presentation approach, and selection of products/publications;
- Reviewing and providing comments on draft products and publications, such as research alerts, prior to dissemination to diverse audiences;
- Providing input and knowledge on the current and future policy issues that will be informed by past and future RHRC studies;
- Providing input on metrics that will be used to evaluate the awardee; and
- Assisting the awardee in selecting appropriate professional meetings, including the total number of meetings, at which to exhibit each year.

The cooperative agreement recipient's responsibilities will include:
- Adherence to HRSA guidelines pertaining to acknowledgement and disclaimer on all products produced by HRSA award funds;
- Coordinating with RHRC grantees to summarize the key research questions for ongoing research and summarize findings for completed publications/products;
- Updating the Rural Health Research website and Listserv based on information from the RHRC grantees about new, on-going, and recently completed research;
- Assessing the market to understand how to best target audiences who will benefit from products published by the RHRCs;
- Executing and monitoring dissemination strategies to increase RHRC publication and Rural Health Research (Rural Health Research Dissemination awardee) website awareness;
- Providing input to RHRCs prior to product publication regarding how to effectively communicate the research findings to diverse target audiences;
- Identifying appropriate professional meetings at which to exhibit each year;
- Developing brief (1-2 pages) research summaries using findings from RHRC research products on key topic areas (e.g. quality, workforce, post-acute care); and
- Establishing evaluation metrics and tracking related data to assist in measuring the success of this cooperative agreement and the RHRC cooperative agreement.

2. Summary of Funding

This program expects to provide funding during federal fiscal years 2017 – 2021. Approximately $135,000 is expected to be available annually to fund one (1) recipient. Applicants may apply for a ceiling amount of up to $135,000 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 is a contingency action taken to ensure that, should funds become available for this purpose, applications can be processed, and funds can be awarded in a timely manner. The project period is four (4) years. Funding beyond the first year is dependent on the availability of appropriated funds for "Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement" 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

Eligible applicants include public and nonprofit entities. Faith-based and community-based organizations, Tribes, and tribal organizations are eligible to apply.

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 this program.

3. Other

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

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.

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.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

HRSA *requires* applicants for this FOA to apply electronically through Grants.gov. Applicants must download the SF-424 Research and Related (R&R) application package associated with this FOA following the directions provided at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

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 and personnel requirements, assurances, certifications, and abstract. You must submit the information outlined in the *R&R Application Guide* in addition to the program specific information below. All applicants 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: biosketches 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 and 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*.

   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 easily understand the proposed project.

   Use the following section headers for the Narrative:

   ▪ *INTRODUCTION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT-- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #1 (Needs Assessment)*
   This section should briefly describe the purpose of the proposed project and clearly demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of why rural stakeholders and decision makers need access to rural focused, health services research. You should provide a brief overview of how your proposed project aligns with the purpose of this cooperative agreement, which is to disseminate and market FORHP funded rural health services research to diverse audiences, such as decision makers and rural stakeholders at national, state, and community levels, with the goal of informing and raising awareness of key policy issues important to rural communities. You should also describe the unique dynamics affecting rural populations compared to urban populations from a health care service, payment and provider point of view, and why rural residents are considered an underserved population. You should demonstrate an understanding of the relevance of this cooperative agreement to the mission of the RHRC program and the goals of FORHP.

   ▪ *RESPONSE -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 (Response)*
   This section should propose the work plan that will be used to meet the program needs and expectations/requirements in this funding opportunity announcement. The work plan should cover the first year of funding in detail but less detail may be used for years two through four. You should demonstrate an understanding of the need to use a variety of strategies, media and tools to increase awareness of RHRC publications. At minimum this section should discuss:

- Developing, maintaining and updating a Rural Health Research website which will serve as an electronic portal and "one stop shop" for new and archived publications and research efforts funded by FORHP[1];
- Functionality of the existing or proposed Rural Health Research website, including search capabilities by (at minimum) keyword, topic, researcher, date of funding, and RHRC;
- Receiving feedback from customers including the RHRCs and external users of the website;
- Developing, maintaining, updating and expanding an automated electronic mailing list (listserv) to ensure that rural stakeholders are notified when new FORHP funded research from the RHRCs is released to the public;
- Developing and maintaining a presence on relevant social media platforms;
- Coordinating with the RHRCs to develop research alerts that will be disseminated through the listserv and social media platforms;
- Identifying appropriate national meetings at which to exhibit at each year;
- Providing technical assistance to RHRCs to create press releases, infographics, and other forms of advanced publicity and dissemination when major studies from the RHRCs are released to the public;
- Coordinating with existing rural-focused information clearing houses, such as RHIhub (https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/) to expand dissemination reach;
- Developing brief (1-2 page) summaries of research findings from RHRC products on key topic areas (e.g. workforce, quality, post-acute care);
- Hosting and promoting webinars that feature FORHP funded research; and
- Identifying target audiences (such as policymakers, state and national associations, and State Offices of Rural Health) relevant to specific FORHP funded research projects.

The work plan should also describe in detail the steps that will be followed for the following activities:
- Developing and disseminating research alerts, including a process for obtaining FORHP approval to disseminate the research product
- Obtaining regular updates from the RHRCs on the status of funded research products
- Collaborating with FORHP and the RHRCs to determine appropriate webinar topics
- Collaborating with FORHP and the RHRCs to determine the topic area and content of brief (1 to 2 page) research summaries

Provide a schedule of proposed major milestones for each year of the project and identify responsible staff. At minimum, major milestones should include:

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[1] The website developed by the grantee will be the property of the grantee; however, because this project is funded through a cooperative agreement rather than a grant, substantial involvement is anticipated between HRSA and the recipient during performance of the contemplated project. The FORHP-funded research products disseminated by the award recipient will remain the property of the authors of the research products and/or their respective organizations. At the end of the project period (June 2021) the awardee is expected to work with FORHP to transfer relevant content to the next award recipient.

- Adding new RHRC research projects when they are funded by FORHP each September
- Hosting webinars
- Regular communication with FORHP and the RHRCs
- Exhibiting at national conferences
- Regular updates and maintenance to the Rural Health Research website

This section should include a discussion of how the rural health research website and listserv can be functional within 10 business days of the project period start date.

- *EVALUATIVE MEASURES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #3 (Evaluative Measures)*
  This section should describe the approach for establishing evaluation metrics and tracking related data to assist in measuring the success of this cooperative agreement and the RHRC cooperative agreement. At a minimum, these metrics should cover:
  - Website "hits" (both to the website in general and to specific research studies and subsections within the website)
  - Frequently searched or accessed topics areas
  - Social media reach
  - Outcomes of exhibiting at national conferences (for example: number of conference attendees that sign up for the listserv while visiting the exhibition booth for the Rural Health Research website)

  This section should include a discussion about how goals, baselines, and/or benchmarks will be determined.

  You should describe how the collected data and information will be conveyed to FORHP and the RHRCs as well as how the information will be used to inform your future year budget activities and updates to the rural health research website (e.g. improved functionality, usability and aesthetics of the site).

- *IMPACT -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #4 (Impact)*
  This section should discuss how the work plan described under RESPONSE will lead to the cooperative agreement's goal of increased awareness of the Rural Health Research website and the research conducted by the RHRCs. Clearly indicate how the work plan will create awareness and reach rural health stakeholders on a national level. Lastly, discuss how the work plan will fill information gaps that can inform rural health policy.

- *RESOURCES/CAPABILITIES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #5(Resources/Capabilities)*
  This section should describe how your organizational capabilities will successfully execute the activities of this cooperative agreement; include previous experience conducting similar work for rural-centric audiences. The description should include:

- Organizational structure, staff roles and responsibilities, and chain of command to attain project objectives
  - Include an organizational chart in attachment 3 (required)
- Availability of facilities and organizational supports to fulfill the requirements of the proposed project
- Evidence of an established relationship with a variety of FORHP funded RHRCs and national rural health services researchers
- Previous experience of the organization and its staff in developing equivalent websites and conducting the activities outlined in the methodology and work plan
- Previous experience, skills and knowledge relevant to evaluating a rural-centric research dissemination website

This section should also include a specific discussion about the qualifications and experience of the principal investigator. The principal investigator should have:
- A masters or professional degree (Ph.D. preferred)
- Experience conducting rural health services research
- Experience with managing a website that specifically serves as a warehouse for research products
- Skills necessary to manage, improve, and implement change as it relates to the Rural Health Research website and other forms of media already specified in this announcement

- *RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #6 (Resolution of Challenges)*
  This section should discuss challenges that are likely to be encountered in designing and implementing the activities described in this application and approaches that will be used to resolve such challenges. This discussion should include any potential copyright and/or prohibition of prior released research issues that may be encountered

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.

Narrative Section	Review Criteria
Introduction and Needs Assessment	(1) Introduction and Needs Assessment
Response	(2) Response
Evaluative Measures	(3) Evaluative Measures
Impact	(4) Impact
Resources/Capabilities	(5) Resources/Capabilities
Resolution of Challenges	(6) Resolution of Challenges

Budget and Budget Narrative	(7) 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 R&R Application Guide*. Please note: the directions offered in the *SF-424 R&R Application Guide* differ from those offered by Grants.gov. Please follow the instructions included in 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.

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 that 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*.

v. *Attachments*

Please 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. **Each attachment must be clearly labeled**.

Attachment 1: Staffing Plan and Job Descriptions for Key Personnel (see Section 4.1.vi. of HRSA's *SF-424 R&R Application Guide) (optional)*
> Keep each job description to one page in length as much as is possible. Include the role, responsibilities, and qualifications of proposed project staff.

Attachment 2: Letters of Agreement and/or Description(s) of Proposed/Existing Contracts Related to this Funding Opportunity Announcement (required if applicant proposes to execute a contract with another entity under this award)
> 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 agreements should clearly describe the roles of the contractors and any deliverable. Letters of agreement must be dated.

Attachment 3: Project Organizational Chart (required)
 Provide a one-page figure that depicts the organizational structure of the project.

Attachment 4: Publications, Invited/Accepted Presentations, Posters (required)
 Provide a list of publications, invited/accepted presentations and posters authored or co-authored by the principal investigator that are relevant to this funding opportunity announcement and demonstrate experience disseminating, marketing and conducting rural focused health services research.

Attachment 5: Summary Progress Report (required for competing continuation applications)

 The summary progress report should be a brief presentation of the accomplishments, in relation to the objectives of the program during the current project period. The report should include:

 (1) The period covered (dates).

 (2) Specific Objectives - Briefly summarize the specific objectives of the project as actually funded.

 (3) Results- Describe the program activities conducted for each objective. Include both positive and negative results or technical problems that may be important.

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.).

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 you are 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 you until you have complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if you have not fully complied with the requirements by the time HRSA is ready to make an award, HRSA may determine that your organization 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 it 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://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp)
- 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 that 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 Dates and Times

Application Due Date
The due date for applications under this FOA is *December 14, 2016 at 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time*.

See Section 8.2.5 – Summary of e-mails from Grants.gov of HRSA's *SF-424 R&R Application Guide* for additional information.

5. Intergovernmental Review

The Rural Health Research Dissemination cooperative agreement 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

Applicants responding to this announcement may request funding for a project period of up to four (4) years, at no more than $135,000 per year. 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 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.

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 the applicant in understanding the standards against which each application will be judged. Critical indicators have been developed for each review criterion to assist the applicant 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 proposal will be considered during objective review.

Review Criteria are used to review and rank applications. The *Rural Health Research Dissemination Cooperative Agreement* has *seven (7)* review criteria:

Criterion 1: INTRODUCTION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT (15 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Introduction and Needs Assessment

The extent to which:
- The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the relevance of this program to the mission of the FORHP and the goals of the RHRC cooperative agreement.

- The project proposed by the applicant aligns with the purpose of the cooperative agreement

- The applicant clearly articulates the issues and challenges facing rural communities and health care providers as well as the associated factors that contribute to those challenges

- The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding of how rural health services research can be used by stakeholders to inform policy decisions

Criterion 2: RESPONSE (25 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Response

The extent to which:
- The activities proposed in the application to develop and maintain a Rural Health Research website meet or exceed the requirements in the funding opportunity announcement, including
  - Inclusion of new and archived publications and research efforts funded by FORHP
  - Functionality (including search capabilities)
  - Reasonability of the plan to be functional within 10 business days of project period start date

- The application includes an appropriate social media plan that increases the visibility of the RHRC work

- The applicant's proposed approach for developing, maintaining and expanding the required listserv is reasonable

- The applicant has proposed effective methods for communicating and coordinating with the RHRCs and the FORHP on tasks including
  - Crafting the content for the research alerts
  - Providing technical assistance related to publicity and dissemination
  - Drafting research summaries
  - Hosting and promoting webinars that feature FORHP funded research

- The schedule of proposed major milestones is logical and demonstrates clear project organization

- The applicant's plan for exhibiting at national meetings is well reasoned and will allow the applicant to reach relevant stakeholders

- The overall work plan is well organized, logical, and clearly explains the applicant's approach to conducting the activities proposed in the application

Criterion 3: EVALUATIVE MEASURES (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Evaluative Measures

The extent to which:
- The application proposes evaluation metrics that are reasonable and will assist in measuring the success of this cooperative agreement and the RHRC cooperative agreement

- The application proposes a reasonable and effective approach for determining goals, baselines and/or benchmarks

Criterion 4: IMPACT (15 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Impact

The extent to which:
- The proposed work plan will lead to the cooperative agreement's goal of increased awareness of the Rural Health Research website and the RHRC publications, particularly to rural health stakeholders

- The applicant's work plan will reach a national audience including relevant targeted audiences

Criterion 5: RESOURCES/CAPABILITIES (20 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Resources/Capabilities

The extent to which:
- The principal investigator meets the qualifications and experience outlined in the FOA including
  - A masters or professional degree (Ph.D. preferred)
  - Experience conducting rural health services research
  - Experience with managing a website that specifically serves as a warehouse for research products

- The applicant demonstrates an established relationship with the FORHP funded RHRCs and other rural health services researchers

- The organizational structure and staffing is appropriate for the activities proposed by the applicant

- The applicant has previous experience in developing an equivalent website(s) and conducting the activities proposed in the application

- The applicant has prior experience, skills, and knowledge relevant to evaluating a research dissemination website

- The applicant has access to the facilities and organizational supports necessary to successful conduct the activities proposed in the application

Criterion 6: RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Resolution of Challenges

The extent to which:
- The applicant identifies potential challenges in implementing the proposed project activities and offers reasonable solutions to mitigate those challenges

- The dissemination strategies proposed take into account any potential copyright and/or prohibition of prior released research issues that may be encountered

Criterion 7: SUPPORT REQUESTED (10 points) – Corresponds to the Budget and Budget Narrative

The extent to which:
- Costs, as outlined in the budget and budget narrative, are reasonable given the scope of work for the cooperative agreement

- Key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve the objectives of the cooperative agreement

2. Review and Selection Process

Please see Section 5.3 of HRSA's *SF-424 R&R Application Guide*.

This program does not have any funding priorities, preferences or special considerations.

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 your organization 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 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).

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

The decision not to make an award or to make an award at a particular funding level, is discretionary and is not subject to appeal to any HHS Operating Division or HHS official or board.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

It is anticipated that awards will be announced prior to the start date of July 1, 2017.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

The Notice of Award will be sent prior to the start date of July 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*.

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. Further information will be provided in the award notice.

VII. Agency Contacts

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

Kim Dews
Grants Management Specialist
Division of Grants Management Operations, OFAM
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Room
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-0655
E-mail: kdews@hrsa.gov

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

> Sarah Bryce
> Research Coordinator
> Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
> Health Resources and Services Administration
> 5600 Fishers Lane, Room
> Rockville, MD 20857
> Telephone: (301) 301-443-5982
> E-mail: sbryce@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, seven days a week, excluding federal holidays at:

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

You may need assistance when working online to submit information and reports electronically through HRSA's Electronic Handbooks (EHBs). You should always obtain a case number when calling for support. 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

For HRSA: http://www.hrsa.gov/index.html

For FORHP: http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/

IX. Tips for Writing a Strong Application

See Section 4.7 of HRSA's *SF-424 R&R Application Guide*.