

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Health Resources & Services Administration

Bureau of Health Workforce
Division of National Health Service Corps

State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)

Funding Opportunity Number: HRSA-18-011

Funding Opportunity Type: New, Competing Continuation

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 93.165

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Fiscal Year 2018

Application Due Date: May 7, 2018

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 1 month to complete.

Issuance Date: February 28, 2018

Modified on 3/20: Attachment 6 no longer counts towards the page limit.

Paula Gumbs
Project Officer, HRSA/BHW/DNHSC
Email: PGumbs@hrsa.gov
Telephone: (301) 443-7581
Fax: (301) 594-4981

Authority: Public Health Service Act, Title III, Section 338I(a)-(i) (42 U.S.C. 254q-1(a)-(i)).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2018 State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP). The purpose of this program is to make grants to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories to assist them in operating their own state educational loan repayment programs for primary care providers working in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) within their State.

Funding Opportunity Title:	State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)
Funding Opportunity Number:	HRSA-18-011
Due Date for Applications:	May 7, 2018
Anticipated Total Annual Available FY18 Funding:	\$15,500,000
Estimated Number and Type of Award(s):	Up to 45 grants
Estimated Award Amount:	Awards ranging from \$80,000 to up to \$1,000,000 per year
Cost Sharing/Match Required:	\$1 for \$1 State to Federal Match
Project Period/Period of Performance:	September 1, 2018 through August 31, 2022 (4 years)
Eligible Applicants:	<p>Entities eligible to apply for this grant program include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.</p> <p>See Section III-1 of this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), formerly known as the funding opportunity announcement (FOA), for complete eligibility information.</p>

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](#), available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/sf424rrguidev2.pdf>, except where instructed in this NOFO to do otherwise. A short video for applicants explaining the *Application Guide* is available at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/applicationguide/>.

Technical Assistance/ Webinar

Day and Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 & Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Time: 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. ET

Call-In Number: 1-888-677-1828

Participant Code: 7911906

Web link: <https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/slrp>

Table of Contents

I.	PROGRAM FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION	1
1.	PURPOSE	1
2.	BACKGROUND	1
II.	AWARD INFORMATION	2
1.	TYPE OF APPLICATION AND AWARD.....	2
2.	SUMMARY OF FUNDING.....	2
III.	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	2
1.	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.....	2
2.	COST SHARING/MATCHING	3
3.	OTHER.....	4
IV.	APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	4
1.	ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE	4
2.	CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION	5
i.	<i>Project Abstract</i>	6
ii.	<i>Project Narrative</i>	6
iii.	<i>Budget</i>	11
iv.	<i>Budget Justification Narrative</i>	11
v.	<i>Attachments</i>	11
3.	DUN AND BRADSTREET DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT	12
4.	SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES.....	13
5.	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW	13
6.	FUNDING RESTRICTIONS	13
V.	APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION.....	14
1.	REVIEW CRITERIA	14
2.	REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS.....	17
3.	ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND OTHER PRE-AWARD ACTIVITIES	17
4.	ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES	18
VI.	AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION.....	18
1.	AWARD NOTICES.....	18
2.	ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS.....	18
3.	REPORTING.....	18
VII.	AGENCY CONTACTS	20
VIII.	OTHER INFORMATION.....	21
IX.	TIPS FOR WRITING A STRONG APPLICATION.....	21
	APPENDIX: SLRP CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	22

I. Program Funding Opportunity Description

1. Purpose

This notice solicits applications for the State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP).

Program Purpose

The purpose of this program is to make grants to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories to assist them in operating their own state educational loan repayment programs for primary care providers working in HPSAs within their state. SLRP supports loan repayment awards to health care providers in exchange for service in underserved communities.

SLRP recipients are afforded the flexibility to select the disciplines and HPSA sites that meet their unique workforce needs. To that end, HRSA is encouraging SLRP applicants to consider how SLRP funds might be used to support the clinical priorities of addressing opioid abuse and mental health conditions. Please note, this NOFO expands the disciplines supported by SLRP to include Masters-level, licensed alcohol and substance abuse counselors.

Program Requirements

SLRP improves access to primary health services for underserved communities and individuals by requiring recipients to:

- Operate their own educational loan repayment programs for primary care providers working in HPSAs within their state.
- Provide a 1-1 match with the federal award.
- Assign eligible health providers to serve in designated HPSAs.

In order to meet these legislative requirements, SLRP has the following critical elements:

- Participant Eligibility
- Discipline Eligibility
- Practice Site Eligibility
- Program Administrative Management and Oversight

Please see [Appendix: SLRP Critical Elements and Program Requirements](#) for program requirements associated with these critical elements.

2. Background

Since SLRP's inception in 1987, clinicians have been recruited and retained in HPSAs across the Nation following the completion their obligation. SLRP utilizes the expertise of each recipient to ensure the investment best suits the community's needs. Successful projects have improved access to primary health services for underserved communities and individuals. In addition, many recipients take a coordinated approach

to align federal, state, and other loan repayment programs to meet the state's health professional needs.

II. Award Information

1. Type of Application and Award

Types of applications sought: New, Competing Continuation

HRSA will provide funding in the form of a grant.

2. Summary of Funding

Approximately \$15,500,000 is expected to be available annually to fund approximately 45 recipients. You may apply for a ceiling amount of up to \$1,000,000 total cost (includes both direct and indirect, facilities and administrative costs) per year. The period of performance is September 1, 2018, through August 31, 2022 (4 years). Funding beyond the first year is dependent on the availability of appropriated funds for the State Loan Repayment Program in subsequent fiscal years, satisfactory recipient performance, and a decision that continued funding is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

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

Applicants chosen during the competition may use their grant funding to cover allowable costs incurred up to 90 days before the grant period start date specified on their award. Applicants are cautioned that they incur such cost at their own risk, and if the grant application is not approved and funded, or if such costs are not otherwise allowable on the grant, HRSA will bear no responsibility for those costs.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Entities eligible to apply for this grant program include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

Current SLRP recipients with project periods ending on or before August 31, 2018, are eligible to apply under this announcement.

In order to be eligible, states must demonstrate that the program operated with the grant funds will be administered directly by a state agency. States must also agree that the grant funds will be used to pay all or part of the principal, interest, and related expenses

of qualifying educational loans of health professionals, in return for their provision of primary health care services in federally designated HPSAs.

The contract between the state and the health professional must contain a breach provision and other terms that are not more favorable than the most favorable terms in the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program (LRP).

2. Cost Sharing/Matching

Cost Sharing/Matching is required for this program.

States must agree to make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-federal contributions in cash toward SLRP contracts in an amount not less than \$1 for each \$1 of federal funds provided in the grant. In its application, the state must also provide adequate assurances that sufficient current year state funds (or other non-federal funds) are available to cover the state match. A state may not use any federal funds or in-kind contributions to satisfy the non-Federal match requirement. A state must verify that contributions from sources other than state appropriated funds are non-federal.

The state's share of the program may be used to repay qualifying loans of health professionals or administrative costs of SLRP, or a combination of both.

Matching funds – Applicants have some flexibility in meeting the required match. For example, states may use:

- Funds appropriated for their own state loan repayment programs as the match for a federal SLRP grant under certain circumstances.¹
- State education loan repayment programs.
- Donations from eligible practice sites.
- Donations from private foundations, corporations, community organizations and/or philanthropies; and
- Donations from rurally-oriented organizations requesting that those funds be used to support placement of practitioners in rural areas.

Please see 45 CFR 75.306 Cost sharing or matching [eCFR — Code of Federal Regulations](#) for more information about match requirements.

¹ SLRP awards cannot supplant states' own loan repayment programs, that is, SLRP funds may not be used to make awards to individuals already obligated under the state program. See "Participant Eligibility – Required Elements" concerning outstanding contractual obligations for health professional services.

3. Other

Ceiling Amount

Applications that exceed the ceiling amount of \$1,000,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this notice.

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 notice.

Multiple Applications

NOTE: Multiple applications from an organization are not allowed. Each state or territory may only submit one application.

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.

Failure to include all required documents as part of the application may result in an application being considered incomplete or non-responsive. Applications received without the appropriate attachments/tables will be deemed non-responsive to the NOFO and will not be considered for funding under this notice.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

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

HRSA recommends that you supply an email address to Grants.gov on the grant opportunity synopsis page when accessing this NOFO (also known as “Instructions” on Grants.gov) or workspace application package. This allows Grants.gov to email organizations in the event HRSA changes and/or republishes the NOFO on Grants.gov before its closing date. Responding to an earlier version of a modified notice may result in a less competitive or ineligible application. *Please note, you are ultimately responsible for reviewing the [For Applicants](#) page for all information relevant to desired opportunities.*

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Section 4 of HRSA's [SF-424 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 [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 NOFO to do otherwise. Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in terms of U.S. dollars (45 CFR § 75.111(a)).

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 **65 pages**, including attachments, biographical sketches (biosketches), letters of commitment, support required in HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#), and this NOFO. Standard OMB-approved forms that are included in the application package do NOT count in the page limitation. Biographical Sketches **do** count in the page limitation. **We strongly urge you to take appropriate measures to ensure your application does not exceed the specified page limit.**

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

Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion Certification

- 1) The prospective recipient certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.
- 2) Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 45 CFR § 75.371, including suspension or debarment. (See also 2 CFR parts 180 and 376, and 31 U.S.C. 3321).
- 3) Where the prospective recipient is unable to attest to any of the statements in this certification, an explanation shall be included in Attachment 7: Other Relevant Documents.

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

Program-Specific Instructions

In addition to application requirements and instructions in Section 4 of HRSA's [SF-424 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

The Abstract: See Section 4.1.ix of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide for complete list of requirements](#).

1. A brief overview of the project as a whole;
2. Specific, measurable objectives that the project will accomplish;
3. Which of the clinical priorities (i.e., addressing opioid abuse and mental health conditions) will be addressed by the project, if applicable; and
4. How the proposed project will be accomplished (i.e., the "who, what, when, where, why and how" of a project).

ii. Project Narrative

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

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

- *PURPOSE AND NEED -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #1*

This section must help reviewers understand the needs of the underserved populations in your state and how the project will improve health care for these populations. Briefly state the purpose of your proposed project and how it relates to the purpose of this funding opportunity. You must cite demographic data whenever possible to support the needs identified below.

- Describe the targeted population and the current gaps in primary care, dental, or mental health workforce, including the socio-economic and cultural determinants of health and health disparities impacting the population or communities served and/or unmet.
- Describe the capacity of the existing health care workforce including any relevant health workforce trends that have been identified.
- Identify the targeted workforce disciplines and specific types HPSAs that your proposed project will address.
- If applicable, describe health workforce needs that align with the clinical priorities of addressing opioid abuse and mental health conditions.

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

You must describe your objectives and proposed activities and how they will address the *Purpose and Needs* identified above as well as the critical elements Participant Eligibility; Discipline Eligibility; Practice Site Eligibility; and Program Administrative Management and Oversight (described in detail in the Appendix).

Participant Eligibility

- Describe the process to determine program eligibility for participants including applicable federal and state requirements. See the Appendix for more information about eligible participants.
 - Describe recruitment strategies and activities to foster a competitive applicant pool and increase program participation, as well as strategies and activities to retain providers in underserved communities.
 - Include a discussion of the policies and processes that states will use to determine and verify eligibility of qualifying educational loans for repayment under the SLRP contract.
 - Include the processes for verifying that all funds provided under the SLRP contract have been used to pay down the qualifying educational loan debt of the health professional before issuing a subsequent contract once the initial SLRP contract is fulfilled, if states provide such “continuation contracts,” “extensions,” or “amendments.”

Discipline Eligibility

- Identify the primary care disciplines that will be supported by the program. See the Appendix for more information about eligible SLRP disciplines.
 - Describe how these disciplines will meet the health workforce gaps identified above.
 - Indicate whether or not the selection of eligible disciplines is determined by state law or policy.
 - Indicate how the disciplines align with the clinical priorities of addressing opioid abuse and mental health conditions, if applicable.

Practice Site Eligibility

- Identify which site types that will be supported by SLRP. See the Appendix for more information about eligible site types.
 - Describe practice site recruitment strategies; the process for determining site eligibility; and the monitoring process for sites with SLRP participants.
 - See *Attachments* section below for more information about Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and sub-recipient agreements to meet the SLRP match requirement.

Program Administrative Management and Oversight

- Provide an overview of the organizational and management structure of the state entity that would be administering the Loan Repayment program. See the Appendix for more information about Program Administrative Management and Oversight.

- Describe any partnerships and collaborations with other organizations, including
 - Description of how the program would be coordinated with federal, state and other organized activities within the state which relate to health workforce services and resources.
 - Partnerships with organizations that formally or informally provide program guidance such as an advisory committee or other entities.
- Describe the strategies and processes proposed to ensure that sites and the participants remain in compliance with program and state guidelines, including:
 - Policies and processes that will be utilized by states to ensure that program requirements are met and service obligations are fully completed.
 - Actions taken when a participant fails to complete the obligation.
 - The monitoring and service verification process.
 - The involvement of the practice sites in participant monitoring.
 - The process to ensure that salaries for SLRP participants are at the prevailing rate and not reduced because of their SLRP award.
 - Monitoring process to ensure the continued eligibility of program participants.
- *(c) RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #2 (c)*

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

- Obstacles related to the critical elements describe in the *Methodology, Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity, and Sustainability* sections.
- Meeting the 1:1 match requirement or other statutory requirements.
- *IMPACT -- This section includes two sub-sections— (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity; and (b) Project Sustainability—both of which correspond to Section V's Review Criteria #3 (a) and (b).*
- *(a) EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #3 (a)*

The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing processes and progress toward meeting goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., key evaluation staff and organizational support, collaborative partners, budget, and other resources); key processes; variables to be measured; expected outcomes of the funded activities; and a description of how all key evaluative measures will be reported. You must demonstrate evidence that the evaluative measures selected will be able to assess: 1) the extent to which the program objectives have been met, and 2) the extent to which these can be attributed to the project.

The evaluation and reporting plan also must indicate the feasibility and effectiveness of plans for dissemination of project results, the extent to which project results may be national in scope, and the degree to which the project activities are replicable.

- *(b) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY -- Corresponds to Section V's Review Criterion #3 (b)*

You must provide a clear plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends, including a description of specific actions you will take to (a) highlight key strategies of your grant project which have been effective in improving practices; (b) obtain future sources of potential funding; as well as (c) provide a timetable for becoming self-sufficient. Recipients are expected to sustain key strategies of their project which have been effective in improving practices and those that have led to improved outcomes for the target population.

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

Succinctly describe your capacity to effectively manage the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative aspects of the proposed project. Provide information on your organization's current mission and structure, including an organizational chart, relevant experience, and scope of current activities, and describe how these elements all contribute to the organization's ability to conduct the program requirements and meet program expectations. (A project organizational chart is requested in Section IV.2.v, Attachment 3.) Discuss how the organization will follow the approved plan, as outlined in the application, properly account for the federal funds, and document well to avoid audit findings. Describe how the unique needs of target populations of the communities served are routinely assessed and improved.

The staffing plan and job descriptions for key faculty/staff must be included in Attachment 1 (Staffing Plan and Job Descriptions for Key Personnel). However, the biographical sketches must be uploaded in the SF-424 RESEARCH & RELATED Senior/Key Person Profile form, which can be accessed in the Application Package under "Mandatory." Include biographical sketches for persons occupying the key positions, not to exceed TWO pages in length each. In the event that a biographical sketch is included for an identified individual who is not yet hired, please include a letter of commitment from that person with the biographical sketch. When applicable, biographical sketches must include training, language fluency, and experience working with racial and ethnic minorities, health disparities, and cultural and linguistically diverse populations that are served by their programs.

Biographical sketches, not exceeding two pages per person, must include the following information:

- Senior/Key Person 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 him/her particularly well-suited for his/her role (e.g., PD/PI) in the project that is the subject of the award.

Section B (required) Positions and Honors. List in chronological order previous positions, concluding 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 submitted or in preparation. 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	
To ensure that you fully address the review criteria, this table provides a crosswalk between the narrative language and where each section falls within the review criteria.	
<u>Narrative Section</u>	<u>Review Criteria</u>
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) Project Sustainability	(3) Impact: (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity (b) Project Sustainability
Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities	(4) Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities
Budget and Budget Narrative	(5) Support Requested – the budget section must 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](#) may differ from those offered by Grants.gov. Please follow the instructions included the *R&R Application Guide* and the additional budget instructions provided below. A budget that follows the *R&R Application Guide* will ensure that, if the application is selected for funding, you will have a well-organized plan, and by carefully following the approved plan can avoid audit issues during the implementation phase.

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

iv. Budget Justification Narrative

See Section 4.1.v. of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). *The budget narrative should match the SF-424 R&R line item forms.*

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. 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](#))

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

Attachment 2: Letters of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, and/or Description(s) of Proposed/Existing Contracts (project-specific)

Provide any documents that describe working relationships between your organization and other entities and programs cited in the proposal. Documents that confirm actual or pending contractual or other agreements must clearly describe the roles of the contractors; deliverables expected; and amount of monetary or in-kind matching funds provided. Letters of agreement must be signed and dated.

Attachment 3: Project Organizational Chart

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

Attachment 4: Tables, Charts, etc.

To give further details about the proposal (e.g., Gantt or PERT charts, flow charts, etc.).

Attachment 5: Letters of Support

Provide a letter of support for each organization or department involved in your proposed project. Letters of support must be from someone who holds the authority to speak for the organization or department (CEO, Chair, etc.), must be signed and dated, and must specifically indicate understanding of the project and a commitment to the project, including any resource commitments (in-kind services, dollars, staff, space, equipment, etc.).

Attachment 6: Sample Contract

Provide a copy of a sample contract used for SLRP participants. This attachment does not count toward the maximum number of pages for this application. Ensure that the contract includes a default provision that must be spelled out clearly and must be at least as stringent as (i.e., not more favorable than) the NHSC LRP default penalty found at 42 U.S.C. § 2540(c)(1).

Attachment 7: Other Relevant Documents

Include here any other document that is 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 your 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](#).

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

4. Submission Dates and Times

Application Due Date

The due date for applications under this NOFO is May 7, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time.

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

5. Intergovernmental Review

SLRP 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 period of performance of up to 4 years, at no more than \$1 million annual base award. 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.

Funds under this notice may not be used for purposes specified in HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#). Funds under this announcement must only be used to repay the qualifying educational loans of health professionals who have entered into SLRP contracts with the states and cannot be used for the following purposes:

- Cost of administering the program;
- To conduct activities for which federal funds are expended
 - i. within the State to provide technical or other nonfinancial assistance to Infant Mortality Grants under section 330(f) of the Public Health Services Act (PHSA);
 - ii. under a memorandum of agreement entered into with the State to Homeless Grants under section 330(h) of the PHSA; or
 - iii. under Grants to States for Operation of Office of Rural Health under section 338J of the PHSA.

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

all other applicable grants requirements, the effectiveness of these policies, procedures and controls is subject to audit.

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

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 and score the merit of the application. The entire proposal will be considered during objective review.

Review criteria are used to review and rank applications. SLRP has 5 (*five*) review criteria:

Criterion 1: PURPOSE AND NEED (20 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Purpose and Need

This section will help reviewers understand the state, as well as the needs of the communities within the HPSA that the program supports. The extent to which the application demonstrates the problem and associated factors contributing to the problem, including the quality of and extent to which the application addresses:

- The purpose of the proposed project outlines the needs of the program to address state needs.
 - The extent to which the State's assessment identifies particularly significant or unique workforce challenges relevant to other states in their region or nationally.
 - The extent to which the state describes and documents the need for the targeted workforce disciplines.
 - The validity of the demographic data cited (i.e., whether the data are publically available and peer-reviewed, if applicable).
- The extent to which the socio-economic and cultural determinants of health and health disparities are served by this segment of the health workforce are discussed.
- The degree to which the State's need for primary care health professionals in federally designated HPSAs is consistent with the health professions and specialists identified in the SLRP application guidance.

Criterion 2: RESPONSE TO PROGRAM PURPOSE (40 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s 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 (30 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Response to Program Purpose Sub-section (a) Methodology/Approach

The extent to which the proposed project responds to the requirements and expectations of the program and addresses the needs highlighted in the *Purpose and Need* section, including:

- The strength of the proposed goals and objectives and their relationship to the identified project.
- The extent to which the activities described in the application are capable of addressing the problem and attaining the project objectives. This includes describing, as appropriate, tools and strategies for meeting stated needs.
- The degree to which the applicant describes strong and effective coordination with federal, state, and other programs for meeting the State’s health professional needs, including HRSA-supported State-based activities and the NHSC Loan Repayment Program.

Criterion 2 (b): WORK PLAN (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Response to Program Purpose Sub-section (b) Work Plan

The extent to which a clear, comprehensive, and specific set of goals and objectives and the concrete steps that will be used to achieve those goals and objectives are provided. The description must include timeline, stakeholders, and a description of the cultural, racial, linguistic and geographic diversity of the populations and communities served.

Criterion 2 (c): RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Response to Program Purpose Sub-section (c) Resolution of Challenges

The extent to which an understanding of potential obstacles and challenges are demonstrated during the design and implementation of the project, as well as a plan for dealing with identified contingencies that may arise.

Criterion 3: IMPACT (20 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Impact Sub-section (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity, and Sub-section (b) Project Sustainability

Criterion 3(a): EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV’s Impact Sub-section (a) Evaluation and Technical Support Capacity

The extent to which requested measurable outcomes are reported, this includes both an internal program performance evaluation plan and HRSA’s required performance measures, as outlined in the corresponding Project Narrative Section IV’s Impact Sub-section (a). Specific criteria include:

- The strength and effectiveness of the method proposed to monitor and evaluate the project results.

- The extent to which data collected is incorporated into program operations to ensure continuous quality improvement.
- The extent to which the evaluation plan includes necessary components (descriptions of the inputs, key processes, variables to be measured, expected outcomes of the funded activities, and how key measures will be reported), as well as a description of how you will collect and manage data in such a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes.
- The extent to which the dissemination of project results (feasibility and effectiveness) are described.
- The extent to which project results may be national in scope, the degree to which the project activities are replicable.

Criterion 3 (b): PROJECT SUSTAINIBILITY (10 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Impact Sub-section (b) Project Sustainability

After federal funds end, describe a effective plan for project sustainability.

Criterion 4: ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES (15 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Organizational Information, Resources and Capabilities

The extent to which project personnel are qualified by training and/or experience to implement and carry out the project; this will be evaluated both through your project narrative, as well as through your Attachments. The capabilities of the applicant organization and the quality and availability of facilities and personnel to fulfill the needs and requirements of the proposed project. The degree to which the applicant describes the institutional experience in managing similar programs and focuses discussion on the development of a plan for tracking future outcomes for the proposed project.

Criterion 5: SUPPORT REQUESTED (5 points) – Corresponds to Section IV's Budget Justification Narrative and SF-424 R&R budget forms

The reasonableness of the proposed budget for each year of the project period, in relation to the objectives of the program and the anticipated results. The budget narrative should match the SF424R&R line item forms.

- The extent to which required resources outlined in the budget are reasonable given the scope of the program.
- The extent to which key personnel have adequate time devoted to the project to achieve project objectives.
- The extent to which a corrective action plan is explained, if the state's funding source is lost.

2. Review and Selection Process

The independent review process provides an objective evaluation to the individuals responsible for making award decisions. The highest ranked applications receive consideration for award within available funding ranges. In addition to the ranking based on merit criteria, HRSA approving officials may also apply other factors in award selection (e.g., geographical distribution), if specified below in this NOFO. HRSA may also consider assessment of risk and the other pre-award activities described in Section 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

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

Applications receiving a favorable objective review are reviewed for other considerations that include past performance, as applicable, cost analysis of the project/program budget, assessment of your management systems, ensuring continued applicant eligibility, and compliance with any public policy requirements, including those requiring just-in-time submissions. You may be asked to submit additional programmatic or administrative information (such as an updated budget or "other support" information) or to undertake certain activities (such as negotiation of an indirect cost rate) in anticipation of an award. However, even at this point in the process, such requests do not guarantee that an award will be made. Following review of all applicable information, the HRSA's 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 \(FAPIIS\)](#). You may review and comment on any information about your organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. HRSA will consider any of your comments, in addition to other information in [FAPIIS](#) in making a judgment about your organization's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed 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, 2018.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

HRSA will issue the Notice of Award prior to the start date of September 1, 2018. See Section 5.4 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#) for additional information.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See Section 2.2 of HRSA's [SF-424 R&R Application Guide](#).

Requirements under Subawards and Contracts under Grants

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

3. Reporting

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

- 1) **Non-Competing Continuation - Progress Report(s).** The recipient must submit a progress report to HRSA on an **annual** basis. HRSA will verify that approved and funded applicants' proposed objectives are accomplished during each year of the project.

The Progress Report has two parts. The first part demonstrates recipient progress on program-specific goals. Recipients will provide performance information on project objectives and 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 project, as well as plans for continuation of the project in the coming budget period. The recipient must also plan to report on dissemination activities in the annual progress report.

Further information will be provided in the award notice.

- 2) **Field Strength Report.** An annual field strength report will be due each September 21. The report contains demographic and discipline data for recipients within the reporting period, and financial data on the recipient program. More information will be available in the award notice.
- 3) **Final Program 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 system at <https://grants.hrsa.gov/webexternal/home.asp>.

The Final Report is designed to provide HRSA with information required to close out a grant after completion of project activities. Recipients are 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 award notice.

- 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 HRSA's Electronic Handbooks system. More specific information will be included in the award notice.
- 5) **Integrity and Performance Reporting.** The Notice of Award will contain a provision for integrity and performance reporting in [FAPIS](#), as required in [45 CFR part 75](#) Appendix XII.

VII. Agency Contacts

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

Vincent Woodward
Grants Management Specialist
HRSA Division of Grants Management Operations, OFAM
5600 Fishers Lane, Mailstop 10SWH03
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 945-3938
Email: VWoodard@hrsa.gov

Gerly Sapphire Marc-Harris
Grants Management Specialist
HRSA Division of Grants Management Operations, OFAM
5600 Fishers Lane, Mailstop 10SWH03
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-2628
Email: smarc-harris@hrsa.gov

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

Paula Gumbs
Project Officer, Division of National Health Service Corps
Attn: SLRP Program
Bureau of Health Workforce, HRSA
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14N58A
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-7581
Fax: (301) 594-4981
Email: Pgumbs@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. For assistance with submitting information in HRSA's Electronic Handbooks, 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

The following technical assistance webinar has been scheduled:

Webinar

Day and Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 & Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Time: 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. ET

Call-In Number: 1-888-677-1828

Participant Code: 7911906

Web link: <https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/slrp>

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 at <https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/currentmembers/stateloanrepaymentprogram/fag/index.html>, and are often updated during the application process.

In addition, a number of recorded webcasts have been developed with information that may assist you in preparing a competitive application. These webcasts can be accessed at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/write-strong/index.html>.

Appendix: SLRP Critical Elements and Program Requirements

SLRP has four (4) critical elements that address the legislative intent and facilitate the administration of the program. Recipients must ensure compliance with these critical elements and federal staff will monitor compliance during the life of the grant.

The critical elements are:

1. Participant Eligibility
2. Discipline Eligibility
3. Practice Site Eligibility
4. Program Administrative Management and Oversight

Critical Element 1: Participant Eligibility

SLRP participants must meet the following program eligibility requirements:

1. Must be United States citizens or nationals (naturalized citizens).
2. Must **not** have an outstanding contractual obligation for health professional service to the Federal Government (e.g., an NHSC Scholarship or Loan Repayment Program obligation, or a NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program obligation), a state loan repayment program other than the one receiving HRSA grant funds), or other entity unless that service obligation will be completely satisfied before the SLRP contract has been signed. Please note that certain provisions in employment contracts can create a service obligation (e.g., an employer offers a physician a recruitment bonus in return for the physician's agreement to work at that facility for a certain period of time or pay back the bonus).

EXCEPTION: Individuals in the Reserve Component of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard are eligible to participate in SLRP. In making awards to reservists, SLRP recipients must inform the potential SLRP participant that:

- ✓ Placement opportunities may be limited by SLRP in order to minimize the impact that a deployment would have on the vulnerable populations served by the reservist.
- ✓ Military training or service performed by reservists will not satisfy the SLRP service commitment.
- ✓ If participant's military training and/or service, in combination with the participant's other absences from the service site, exceed 35 workdays per service year, the SLRP service obligation must be extended to compensate for the break in service.
- ✓ If the approved SLRP site where the reservist is serving at the time of his/her deployment is unable to reemploy that reservist, SLRP will reassign the participant to another SLRP-approved service site to complete his or her remaining SLRP service commitment. Because it is sometimes difficult to identify short-term assignments, a participant may be asked by the service site to sign an employment contract that extends beyond the completion date of his or her SLRP service commitment.

- ✓ If the participant is a reservist and is called to active duty, the amount of time he/she is on active duty (which does not count as SLRP service) must be added to the length of the original SLRP obligation.
3. Must not have:
 - Federal judgment liens.
 - A current default on any federal payment obligations (e.g., Health Education Assistance Loans, Nursing Student Loans, federal income tax liabilities, Federal Housing Authority loans, etc.) even if the creditor now considers them to be in good standing;
 - Breached a prior service obligation to the federal/state/local government or other entity, even if they subsequently satisfied the obligation; and
 - Had any federal or non-federal debt written off as uncollectible or received a waiver of any federal service or payment obligation.
 4. Must practice **full-time or half-time** in providing **primary health services** at an eligible site.
 - **“Full-time”** service is defined in the NHSC statute as a minimum of 40 hours per week, for a minimum 45 weeks per year.
 - **“Half-time”** service is defined in the NHSC statute as a minimum of 20 hours per week (not to exceed 39 hours per week) for a minimum 45 weeks per year.
 5. Must work in a HPSA that corresponds to their training and/or discipline. For example, psychiatrists and other mental health providers must serve in a mental health HPSA.
 6. Must agree to use SLRP funds only to repay qualifying educational loans. Qualifying educational loans are Government and commercial loans for actual costs paid for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses related to the education of the participant.

Critical Element 2: Discipline Eligibility

SLRP participants must have completed training in an accredited graduate training program in, and possess an active and valid license (without restrictions or encumbrances) to practice in one of the following **eligible disciplines**:

- MD: Allopathic Medicine
- DO: Osteopathic Medicine
- DDS/DMD: General and Pediatric Dentistry
- NP: Nurse Practitioner
- CNM: Certified Nurse-Midwife
- PA: Physician Assistant
- RDH: Registered Dental Hygienist
- HSP: Health Service Psychologist (Clinical and Counseling)
- LCSW: Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- PNS: Psychiatric Nurse Specialist
- LPC: Licensed Professional Counselor
- MFT: Marriage and Family Therapist
- RN: Registered Nurse

- Pharm: Pharmacist
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselors licensed/credentialed/certified by their state of practice that meet educational requirements and master's degree requirement

Approved Primary Care Specialties for Physicians:

- Family Medicine (and osteopathic general practice)
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Geriatrics
- Psychiatry

General Practitioners (physicians who have not completed residency training programs) are not eligible for funding under SLRP.

Approved Primary Care Specialties for Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants:

- Adult
- Family
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry/mental health
- Geriatrics
- Women's health

Critical Element 3: Practice Site Eligibility

Health professionals participating in SLRP must fulfill their service obligation at an eligible practice site. The following site types are eligible to be approved as practice sites for participants:

1. Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)
 - Community Health Centers
 - Migrant Health Centers
 - Homeless Programs
 - Public Housing Programs
2. FQHC Look-A-Likes
3. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Certified Rural Health Clinics
4. Other Health Facilities
 - Community Outpatient Facilities
 - Community Mental Health Facilities
 - State and County Health Department Clinics
 - Immigration and Customs Enforcement Health Service Corps
 - Free Clinics
 - Mobile Units
 - School-based Programs

- Critical Access Hospitals affiliated with a qualified outpatient clinic
- Long-term Care Facilities
- State Mental Health Facilities

5. Indian Health Service Facilities, Tribally-Operated 638 Health Programs, and Urban Indian Health Programs

- Federal Indian Health Service (IHS) Clinical Practice Sites
- Tribal/638 Health Clinics
- Urban Indian Health Program
- IHS and tribal hospitals – click to view [National Health Service Corps' IHS and tribal hospital site expansion](#)

6. Correctional or Detention Facilities

- Federal Prisons
- State Prisons

7. Private Practices (Solo or Group)

To be eligible, practice sites must also meet the following criteria:

1. Public and non-profit private entities located in and providing health care services in HPSAs. Non-profit private entity means an entity which may not lawfully hold or use any part of its net earnings to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual and which does not hold or use its net earnings for that purpose.
2. For-profit health facilities operated by non-profit organizations must accept reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program, utilize a sliding fee scale, and see all patients regardless of their ability to pay.
3. All practice sites must be located in federally-designated HPSAs. Medically Underserved Areas or Populations and shortage areas designated by the state do not qualify.
4. Eligible practice sites must charge for professional services at the usual and customary prevailing rates except free clinics.
5. Eligible practice sites must provide discounts for individuals with limited incomes (i.e., use a sliding fee scale). For information about current HHS Poverty Guidelines, please visit <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-06-26/pdf/2017-13312.pdf>.
 - For those with annual incomes at or below 100 percent of the HHS Poverty Guidelines, states must ensure that practice sites provide services at no charge or at a nominal charge.
 - For individuals between 100 and 200 percent of the HHS Poverty Guidelines, states must ensure that practice sites provide a schedule of discounts, which must reflect a nominal charge covered by a third party (either public or private).

- A state may allow practice sites to charge for services to the extent that payment will be made by a third party which is authorized or under legal obligation to pay the charges.

Critical Element 4: Program Administrative Management and Oversight

SLRP recipients must adhere to the following program requirements. These requirements will be monitored by HRSA staff.

- SLRP Programs are allowed to make an award of up to \$50,000 a year to a participant (\$25,000 federal funds; \$25,000 state funds a year). This is the maximum loan repayment amount authorized under the NHSC LRP.

EXCEPTION: Recipients may make awards of more than \$50,000 per year *if* the amount over and above the \$50,000 authorized for NHSC LRP participants comes from non-federal sources and the contract participant will serve at a site in a high need HPSA that is authorized for placement of an NHSC Scholarship Program participant.

- Participants' loan balances must be verified before making initial and continuation awards. Describe the verification process. Contracted participants are required to use the funds to repay qualifying educational loans.
- SLRP participant contracts must contain the following information and terms:
 1. Contract period (award period).
 2. Total award amount of contract.
 3. Name and location of approved practice site (including 9-digit zip code and HPSA identification number).
 4. The state agrees to pay all or part of the principal, interest, and related expenses of the qualifying educational loans of the health professional. If the award amount exceeds \$50,000 per year, the individual must agree to serve at a site that is in a high need HPSA that is authorized for placement of an NHSC Scholarship Program participant and the additional funds must come from non-federal sources.
 5. In return for repayment of qualifying loans, the individual agrees to provide primary health services for a minimum of 2 years full-time or 4 years for half-time service at a public or nonprofit private entity that serves a federally designated HPSA.
 6. The health professional agrees to provide either full- or half-time clinical service at a HPSA site.
 7. The health professional agrees to accept reimbursement under Medicare, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, as appropriate for his/her designated discipline, to utilize a sliding fee scale, and to see all patients regardless of their ability to pay.

8. If the participant fails to begin or complete service, he/she will incur a debt to the state in an amount not less than the damages that would be owed under the NHSC LRP default provision (see below).
 9. The state must have a waiver provision to accommodate cases where the participant is unable to complete the service obligation due to illness or other compelling personal circumstances. The waiver provision must not be more favorable than the NHSC LRP's waiver provision at 42 U.S.C. § 254(o)(d)(2). That provision allows the Secretary of HHS to waive, in whole or in part, an NHSC LRP service or payment obligation in cases where enforcement of the obligation would be impossible or an extreme hardship and unconscionable. The Secretary may also suspend (rather than permanently waive) a participant's obligation for up to 1 year if his/her compliance with the obligation is temporarily impossible or an extreme hardship.
 10. The state may cancel the obligation in the case of the participant's death.
 11. The state may allow participants to request termination of their SLRP contract. The contract must clearly state the terms and conditions for termination. The state may fashion its own termination provision so long as it is not more favorable than the NHSC LRP's termination provision, which requires the participant to make a written request for termination and return any funds disbursed to him/her, no later than 45 days before the end of the fiscal year in which the contract was awarded.
- In addition to the above required terms, SLRP recipients are strongly encouraged to include the following information and terms:
 1. Beginning and ending dates of service commitment.

Note: A participant's employment at the service site prior to the effective date of the SLRP contract does **not** qualify for service credit. In addition, if the state contract allows participants a certain time period within which to commence service (e.g., within 3 months of signing the contract), service credit must begin only after the participant has actually begun practice at the service site in accordance with SLRP service requirements. For example, the NHSC LRP contract provides that service credit will begin on the date the contract has been signed by both parties (the participant and an authorized agency official) or the date that the participant begins practice at the approved site, whichever is later.
 2. The number of absences allowed in a service year, for purposes of earning service credit.

Participants are required to serve at least 45 weeks per year; participants who fail to serve at least 45 weeks for any reason (vacation, sick leave, Continuing Medical Education, etc.) fail to meet this requirement.
 3. Any additional variations on the clinical service requirements.

For example, the state has the flexibility to consider teaching as clinical practice for up to 8 hours per week for SLRP participants serving full-time. If a clinician is serving at a HRSA-funded Teaching Health Center, up to 20 hours per week of teaching can count towards the full-time service obligation.

Note: For SLRP participants serving half-time, no more than 4 hours of the minimum 20 hours per week may consist of teaching or practice-related administrative activities. If the approved site is a HRSA-funded Teaching Health Center, teaching activities shall not exceed 10 hours per week.

- SLRP recipients must adhere to the NHSC LRP default provision found at 42 U.S.C. § 254o(c)(1). SLRP participants are considered to be in default if they do not complete the period of obligated service at an eligible site in accordance with their SLRP contract, or otherwise fail to comply with the terms of the contract, even if no monies have yet been disbursed to the participant. That is, if a state does not release SLRP funds to a participant until the service obligation is completed, the participant's failure to complete service would still be considered a default that is reportable to HRSA, and he/she would still incur a debt to the State. The amount owed is due to be paid within one year of breach.

The NHSC LRP default provision is found at 42 U.S.C. § 254o(c)(1) and reads as follows:

If (for any reason not specified in subsection (a) of this section or section 254p(d) of this title) an individual breaches the written contract of the individual under section 254l-1 of this title by failing either to begin such individual's service obligation in accordance with section 254m or 254n of this title or to complete such service obligation, the United States shall be entitled to recover from the individual an amount equal to the sum of—

(A) the total of the amounts paid by the United States under section 254l-1(g) of this title on behalf of the individual for any period of obligated service not served;

(B) an amount equal to the product of the number of months of obligated service that were not completed by the individual, multiplied by \$7,500; and

(C) the interest on the amounts described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States, from the date of the breach;

except that the amount the United States is entitled to recover under this paragraph shall not be less than \$31,000.

A breach formula that is different than the one above may be used in SLRP contracts; however, the amount due to the State cannot be less than what would be owed if the above formula was used. In addition, the State must require that individuals who breach owe not less than \$31,000 to the State, even if its breach formula would result in a lower amount due.

- Where a state has had one or more initial breaches by health professionals of SLRP contracts in the fiscal year preceding that of the grant application, the Secretary of HHS is required by law to offset the state's grant award. The offset formula is found at 42 U.S.C. § 254q-1(g)(2). The Secretary may waive the reduction in the amount of the subsequent grant award only if it is determined that a health professional's breach was attributable solely to the incapacity of the professional due to serious illness.