

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENT
OPPORTUNITY AND SELF-
SUFFICIENCY (ROSS)**

**RESIDENT OPPORTUNITY AND SELF-
SUFFICIENCY (ROSS) FAMILY AND
HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM**

Billing Code 4210-01-C

Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Family and Homeownership Program

Overview Information

A. *Federal Agency Name:* Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Public and Indian Housing.

B. *Funding Opportunity Title:* ROSS Family and Homeownership, under the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program.

C. *Announcement Type:* Initial announcement.

D. *Funding Opportunity Number:* The Federal Register number is FR-5030-N-31. The OMB approval number is 2577-0229.

E. *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):* Resident Opportunity and Self Sufficiency, 14.870.

F. *Dates:* The application deadline date is August 8, 2006. Applications submitted through <http://www.grants.gov> must be received and validated by grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 Eastern time on the application deadline date.

G. *Additional Overview Content Information:*

1. Purpose of Program

The purpose of the Public and Indian Housing Resident Opportunity and Self Sufficiency (ROSS) program is to provide grants to public housing agencies (PHAs), tribes/tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs), Resident Associations (RAs), and nonprofit organizations, including grassroots, faith-based and other community-based organizations for the delivery and coordination of supportive services and other activities designed to help public and Indian housing residents attain economic and housing self-sufficiency.

2. Funding Available

A total of approximately \$18 million is available for ROSS in fiscal year 2006.

3. Award Amounts

Awards, depending on the unit count and type of grantee, will range from \$100,000 to \$600,000. Please see the program description for more specific information about funding amounts.

4. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are PHAs; tribes/TDHEs; nonprofit organizations including grassroots faith-based and

other community-based organizations that have resident support or the support of tribes; RAs; resident councils (RCs); resident organizations (ROs); City-Wide Resident Organizations (CWROs); Intermediary Resident Organizations (IROs); Jurisdiction-Wide Resident Organizations; Regional Resident Organizations; Resident Management Corporations (RMCs); Site-Based Resident Organizations; Statewide Resident Organizations (SROs); and Tribal/TDHE resident groups. The term "resident association" or "RA" will be used to refer to all types of eligible resident organizations. Please see the section on "Definition of Terms" for a complete definition of each type of eligible resident organization.

5. Cost Sharing/Match Requirement

At least 25 percent of the requested grant amount is required as a match. The match may be in cash and/or in-kind donations. The match is a threshold requirement.

6. Grant Term

The grant term for each funding category is three years from the execution date of the grant agreement.

Grant program	Total funding	Eligible applicants	Maximum grant amount (units refer to the number of family-occupied units as indicated on ROSS Fact Sheet (HUD-52751))
ROSS—Family and Homeownership.	\$18 million	PHAs/Tribes/TDHEs Resident associations Non-profit entities	\$150,000 for 1-780 units; \$250,000 for 781-2,500 units; \$350,000 for 2,501-7,300 units; \$600,000 for 7,301 or more units. \$100,000 \$100,000 per RA; Maximum award is \$300,000.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. *ROSS Family and Homeownership*

The purpose is to provide funding to assist PHAs, tribes/TDHEs, RAs, nonprofit organizations which include grassroots community based organizations, inclusive of faith-based organizations, create programs which will help residents achieve economic self-sufficiency. Applicants must submit proposals that will link residents with services such as job training, and educational opportunities that facilitate economic and housing self-sufficiency. The Homeownership component provides funds to recipients to deliver homeownership training, counseling and supportive services for residents of Public and Indian housing who are participating or have participated in

self-sufficiency programs, such as ROSS, Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) or other Federal, state, or local self-sufficiency programs ROSS-Elderly/Persons with Disabilities funding and Public Housing Neighborhood Networks funding are being offered under separate Notices in the 2006 SuperNOFA.

B. *Definition of Terms*

1. *City-Wide Resident Organization* consists of members from Resident Councils, Resident Management Corporations, and Resident Organizations who reside in public housing developments that are owned and operated by the same PHA within a city.

2. *Community Facility* means a non-dwelling structure that provides space for multiple supportive services for the

benefit of public or Indian housing residents and others eligible for the services provided. Supportive services may include but are not limited to:

- a. Job-training;
- b. After-school activities for youth;
- c. Neighborhood Networks (formerly Twenty/20 Education Communities (TECs), Campus of Learners activities);
- d. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes; and
- e. Child care.

3. *Contract Administrator* means an overall grant administrator or a financial management agent (or both) that oversees the implementation of the grant and/or the financial aspects of the grant.

4. *Elderly person* means a person who is at least 62 years of age.

5. *Jurisdiction-Wide Resident Organization* means an incorporated

nonprofit organization or association that meets the following requirements:

a. Most of its activities are conducted within the jurisdiction of a single housing authority;

b. There are no incorporated resident councils or resident management corporations within the jurisdiction of the single housing authority;

c. It has experience in providing start-up and capacity-building training to residents and resident organizations; and

d. Public housing residents representing unincorporated resident councils within the jurisdiction of the single housing authority must comprise a majority of the board of directors.

6. *Tribally Designated Housing Entity (TDHE)* is an entity authorized or established by one or more Indian tribes to act on behalf of each such tribe authorizing or establishing the housing entity.

7. *Indian Tribe* means any tribe, band, nation, or other organized group of a community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village, regional, or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians pursuant to the Indian Self Determination and Education Act of 1975 or any state-recognized tribe eligible for assistance under section 4(12)(C) of NAHASDA.

8. *Intermediary Resident Organizations* means jurisdiction-wide resident organizations, citywide resident organizations, statewide resident organizations, regional resident organizations, and national resident organizations.

9. *NAHASDA-assisted resident* means a member of a tribe (as defined above) who has been assisted by the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) of 1996.

10. *National Resident Organization (NRO)* is an incorporated nonprofit organization or association for public housing that meets each of the following requirements:

a. It is national (*i.e.*, conducts activities or provides services in at least two HUD areas or two states);

b. It has the capacity to provide start-up and capacity-building training to residents and resident organizations; and

c. Public housing residents representing different geographical locations in the country are members of the board of directors.

11. *Nonprofit organization* is an organization that is exempt from federal

taxation. A nonprofit organization can be organized for the following purposes: charitable, religious, educational, scientific, or other similar purposes in the public interest. In order to qualify, an organization must be a corporation, community chest, fund, or foundation. An individual or partnership will not qualify. To obtain nonprofit status, qualified organizations must file an application with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and receive designation as such by the IRS. For more information, go to <http://www.irs.gov>. Applicants who are in the process of applying for nonprofit status, but have not yet received nonprofit designation from the IRS, will not be considered nonprofit organizations. All nonprofit applicants must submit their IRS determination letter to prove their nonprofit (*e.g.* 501(c)(3)) status. Please see the section on "Threshold Requirements" for more information. Nonprofit applicants must also provide letters of support as described in the "Threshold Requirements" section.

12. *National nonprofit organizations* work on a national basis and have the capacity to mobilize resources on both a national and local level. All nonprofit applicants must submit their IRS determination letter to prove their nonprofit (*e.g.* 501(c)(3)) status. National nonprofit applicants must also provide letters of support as outlined in the "Threshold Requirements" section.

13. *Past Performance* is a threshold requirement. Using Rating Factor 1 (described in the "Application Review Information" section of this NOFA), HUD's field offices will evaluate applicants for past performance to determine whether an applicant has the capacity to manage the grant for which they are applying. The area Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) will review past performance for tribal/TDHE submissions. Field offices will evaluate the past performance of contract administrators for applicants required to have a contract administrator.

14. *Person with disabilities* means a person who:

a. Has a condition defined as a disability in section 223 of the Social Security Act; or

b. Has a developmental disability as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights Act.

The term "person with disabilities" does not exclude persons who have acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for AIDS. In addition, no individual shall be considered a person with disabilities,

for purposes of eligibility for low-income housing, solely on the basis of any drug or alcohol dependence.

The definition of a person with disabilities contained in section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations must be used for purposes of reasonable accommodations and program accessibility. Please see 24 CFR § 5.403.

15. *Project Coordinator* is responsible for coordinating the grantee's approved activities to ensure that grant goals and objectives are met. A qualified project coordinator is someone with experience managing projects and preferably has experience working with supportive services. The project coordinator and grantees are responsible for ensuring that all federal requirements are followed.

16. *Resident Association (RA)* means any or all of the forms of resident organizations as they are defined elsewhere in this Definitions section and includes Resident Councils (RC), Resident Management Corporations (RMC), Regional Resident Organizations (RRO), Statewide Resident Organizations (SRO), Jurisdiction-Wide Resident Organizations, and National Resident Organizations (NRO). The NOFA will use "Resident Association" or "RA" to refer to all eligible types of resident organizations. See 24 CFR 964.115 for more information.

17. *Regional Resident Organization (RRO)* means an incorporated nonprofit organization or association for public housing that meets each of the following requirements:

a. The RRO is regional (*i.e.*, not limited by HUD Areas);

b. The RRO has experience in providing start-up and capacity-building training to residents and resident organizations; and

c. Public housing residents representing different geographical locations in the region must comprise the majority of the Board of Directors.

18. *Resident Management Corporation (RMC)* means an entity that proposes to enter into, or enters into a contract to conduct one or more management activities of a PHA and meets the requirements of 24 CFR 964.120.

19. *Resident Organization (RO) for tribal entities* means an incorporated or unincorporated nonprofit tribal organization or association that meets each of the following criteria:

a. It shall consist of residents only, and only residents may vote;

b. If it represents residents in more than one development or in all of the developments of the tribal/TDHE community, it shall fairly represent

residents from each development that it represents;

c. It shall adopt written procedures providing for the election of specific officers on a regular basis; and

d. It shall have an elected governing board.

20. *Secretary* means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

21. *Site-Based Resident Associations* means resident councils or resident management corporations representing a specific public housing development.

22. *Statewide Resident Organization (SRO)* is an incorporated nonprofit organization or association for public housing that meets the following requirements:

a. The SRO has statewide jurisdiction;

b. The SRO has experience in providing start-up and capacity-building training to residents and resident organizations; and

c. Public housing residents representing different geographical locations in the state must comprise the majority of the Board of Directors.

23. *Tribal/TDHE Resident Group* means tribal/TDHE resident groups that are democratically elected groups such as IHA-wide resident groups, area-wide resident groups, single development groups, or resident management corporations (RMCs).

C. Regulations Governing the ROSS Program

ROSS Family and Homeownership is governed by 24 CFR Part 964.

II. Award Information

A. Performance Period and Award Type

1. *Grant Period.* Three years. The grant period shall begin the day the grant agreement and the form HUD-1044, "Assistance Award/Amendment" are signed by both the grantee and HUD.

2. *Grant Extensions.* Requests to extend the grant term beyond the grant term must be submitted in writing to the local HUD field office or area ONAP at least 90 days prior to the expiration of the grant term. Requests must explain why the extension is necessary, what work remains to be completed, and what work and progress was accomplished to date. Extensions may be granted only once by the field office or area ONAP for a period not to exceed six months and may be granted for a further six months by the HUD Headquarters Program Office at the request of the Field Office or Area ONAP.

3. *Type of Award.* Grant agreement.

4. *Subcontracting.* Subcontracting is permitted. Grantees must follow federal procurement regulations found in HUD

regulations at 24 CFR 84.40-84.48 and 24 CFR 85.36.

5. *Total Funding.* The Department expects to award \$18,000,000 under this funding category of ROSS. Awards will be made as follows:

a. PHAs must use the number of occupied conventional family public housing units as of September 30, 2005, per their budget to determine the maximum grant amount they are eligible for in accordance with the categories listed below. (Use HUD-51751 ROSS Fact Sheet.) Applicants should clearly indicate on the Fact Sheet the number of eligible units under their Annual Contributions Contract.

Number of occupied family conventional units	Maximum funding for PHAs/tribes/TDHEs
1-780 units	\$150,000
781-2,500 units	250,000
2501-7,300 units	350,000
7,301 or more units	600,000

b. The maximum grant award is \$100,000 for each RA.

c. Nonprofit organizations that have resident support or the support of tribes or RAs are limited to \$100,000 for each RA. A nonprofit organization may submit a single application for no more than three different RAs from the same PHA for a maximum grant award of \$300,000. Nonprofit organizations may submit more than one application provided they target residents of distinct PHAs or tribes/TDHEs. The maximum funds that may be awarded to any nonprofit applicant is \$300,000 overall. In cases where nonprofit applicants are not able to obtain support from RAs, they must obtain letters of support from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs and they may also submit letters from one or more of the following: Resident Advisory Boards (RABs), local civic organizations, or units of local government. **Note:** All nonprofit applicants that do not include letters of support from RAs must include a letter of support from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs. (Please see Threshold Requirements for more information). Support letters must indicate the developments to be served by the nonprofit organization.

Funding for nonprofit applicants that do not receive letters of support from RAs will be determined as follows (support letters from PHAs must indicate the developments to be served by the nonprofit organization as well as the number of occupied conventional family public housing units in those developments):

Number of conventional units	Maximum funding for non-profits with support letters from PHAs (not RAs)
1-2,500 units	\$100,000
2501-7,300 units	200,000
7,301 or more units	300,000

Applicants should see the General Section for instructions on submitting support letters and other documentation with their electronic application.

d. Tribes/TDHEs should use the number of units counted as Formula Current Assisted Stock for Fiscal Year-2005 as defined in 24 CFR 1000.316. Tribes/TDHEs are eligible for the same amounts as PHAs within each category in (a) above. Tribes that have not previously received funds from the Department under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 should count housing units under management that are owned and operated by the Tribe and are identified in their housing inventory as of September 30, 2005, for family units. Tribes should clearly indicate the number of units under management on the Fact Sheet.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are PHAs, tribes/TDHEs, RAs, and nonprofit organizations (including those nonprofit organizations supported by resident organizations or PHAs, tribes/TDHEs and RABs).

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

The required Match is 25% of requested funds. The match is a threshold requirement. Applicants who do not demonstrate the minimum 25 percent match will fail the threshold requirement and will not receive further consideration for funding. Please see the section below on threshold requirements for more information on what is required for the match.

C. Other

1. Eligible Activities

a. Eligible Program Activities

Applicants should propose implementing comprehensive programs within the three year grant term which will result in improved housing and economic self-sufficiency for Public and Indian housing residents. Proposals should involve partnerships with organizations that will enhance grantees' ability to provide educational programs, housing counseling, fair housing counseling, job training and

other supportive services for residents. All applicants must complete a work plan (see sample work plans on HUD's Web site at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>) covering the three-year grant term.

The eligible activities are listed in five categories, from basic to advanced: (1) Life-Skills Training; (2) Job Training, Job Search and Placement Assistance; (3) Post-Employment Follow-up; (4) Activities to Support Career Advancement and Long-term Economic Self-Sufficiency; and (5) Homeownership. Applicants are not limited to choosing one category of activity, but rather should design their programs to address the specific needs of the population they are targeting. Only applicants proposing activities in Category 5, Homeownership, and able to show existing linkages to an existing homeownership program such as, for PHAs, Housing Choice Voucher-Homeownership, Section 32, or homeownership programs and resources offered by other organizations or state or local homeownership programs and for Tribes/TDHEs, programs such as the Mutual Help Homeownership Opportunity Program, the Section 184 Program, and homeownership programs developed under the Indian Housing Block Grant Program such as mortgage assistance, will be eligible for 2 points in Rating Factor 3, Soundness of Approach, under "Addressing HUD's Policy Priorities—Providing Increased Homeownership and Rental Opportunities for Low-and-Moderate-Income Persons. * * *" Funds may be used for, but are not limited to, the activities described below.

(Category 1) Life-skills Training (for Youth and Adults). Applicants' proposals can cover, but are not limited to, the following types of activities:

(a) Credit. The importance of having good credit and how to maintain good credit.

(b) Banking and Money Management. How to open a bank account; balance a checkbook; create a weekly spending budget and establish contingency plans for child care and transportation, etc.

(c) Real Life Issues. Information on tax forms; voter registration; leases; car insurance; health insurance; long-term care insurance; etc.

(d) Literacy training and GED preparation.

(e) College preparatory courses and information.

(f) Goal setting.

(g) Mentoring.

(h) Hiring residents to help with the implementation of this program. **Note:** Stipends and salaries serve different purposes. Resident salaries can only be

used to hire residents to help program staff with the implementation of grant activities.

(Category 2) Job Training, Job Search and Placement Assistance. Eligible activities include but are not limited to:

(a) Skills Assessment of participating residents.

(b) Applying for a job. How to complete employment forms; highlighting skills employers are looking for; researching job opportunities in the area; calculating net wages.

(c) Soft skills training including problem solving and other cognitive skills; oral and written communication skills; workplace norms (appropriate dress, punctuality, respectful communication, etc.); work ethic; interpersonal and teamwork skills.

(d) Creating job training and placement programs.

(e) Resume writing.

(f) Interviewing techniques.

(g) Employer linkage and job placement. Working with local employers and job placement providers to design and offer training that addresses local employers' needs, create a job placement program that refers trained residents to participating employers and other local area employers.

(h) Career advancement and planning programs. Such programs should be designed to:

(i) Set career goals;

(ii) Provide strategies such as finding a strong professional mentor within an organization for which residents may be working and focusing on the organization's priorities.

(iii) Reinforce welfare-to-work programs and focus efforts on increasing residents' earning capacity. Activities can include job counseling, helping residents secure better paying jobs or jobs in better work environments, preparing for work in a new job category, obtaining additional job skills and other job-related or educational training.

(iv) Working with local employers to create opportunities that combine education and skills training with jobs. Strategies that promote work-based learning can offer the most effective method for giving new workers the tools they need to move on to a career ladder and achieve upward mobility.

(Category 3) Post-employment follow-up. After placing residents in jobs, providing follow-up and ongoing support to newly hired residents can have a significant positive impact on long-term job retention.

(Category 4) Activities to Support Career Advancement and Long-term Economic Self-Sufficiency.

(a) Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs). Applicants may create programs that encourage residents to save and contribute to match savings accounts such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). The programs should include financial counseling and education activities. ISAs may only be used for three purposes: (1) To purchase a first home that is existing or under construction when the purchase contract is signed; (2) to receive post-secondary education or training; or (3) to start a local business (other than acquiring, leasing, constructing, or rehabilitating real property in connection with the business). Applicants are encouraged to leverage funds by working with local financial organizations, which can also contribute to residents' ISAs. FSS escrow accounts may not be used as a match for ROSS-Family-Homeownership-funded ISAs. Grantees shall consult the Internal Revenue Service regarding possible tax consequences of the ISAs to participating residents.

(b) Housing Counseling to increase homeownership opportunities. This can include information to help residents move to market rate rental housing and/or "pre-purchase" homeownership counseling and training. This may include training on such subjects as credit and financial management; credit repair; housing search; how to finance the purchase of a home; fair housing; Individual Savings Accounts; Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA); and home maintenance.

(Category 5) Homeownership. Applicants should be able to show existing linkages with HUD homeownership programs such as: The Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program, the PHA Homeownership Program also known as Section 32 (formerly the Section 5(h) Homeownership Program) or homeownership programs and resources offered by other organizations or state or local homeownership programs.

Tribes/TDHEs should be able to show existing linkages with programs such as the Mutual Help Homeownership Opportunity Program, the Section 184 Program, and homeownership programs developed under the Indian Housing Block Grant Program such as mortgage assistance. Proposals should involve partnerships with organizations that will enhance the services grantees will offer. Applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with HUD-approved housing counseling agencies. For a list of HUD-approved housing

counseling agencies, go to: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hccprof14.cfm>.

Eligible Activities include but are not limited to:

- (1) Training to include:
 - (a) Asset building;
 - (b) Credit counseling and credit scoring;
 - (c) Financial literacy and management;
 - (d) Selecting a real estate broker;
 - (e) Choosing a lender;
 - (f) Appraisals;
 - (g) Home inspections;
 - (h) Avoiding delinquency and predatory lending;
 - (i) Foreclosure prevention;
 - (j) Home maintenance and financial management for first-time homeowners;
 - (k) Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA); and
 - (1) Fair Housing Counseling.
 - (2) Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs). You may create programs that encourage residents to save and contribute to match savings accounts such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). ISAs to be used solely for (a) escrow accounts, (b) down payment assistance and (c) closing costs, to assist the resident to purchase an existing dwelling unit or a dwelling unit under construction.

b. Eligible Other Activities

(1) Hiring of a qualified project coordinator to run the grant program. A qualified project coordinator must have at least two years of experience managing programs and should have experience working on supportive services programs. If Category 5 activities are being proposed, a qualified grant coordinator must have experience working on homeownership programs designed for typically underserved populations. The project coordinator should be hired for the entire three-year term of the grant. The project coordinator is responsible for:

- (a) Marketing the program to residents;
- (b) Assessing participating residents' skills and job-readiness;
- (c) Assessing participating residents' needs for supportive services, *e.g.*, child care, transportation costs, etc.
- (d) Assisting a tribe or TDHE to create a resident group to promote self-sufficiency efforts on the reservation;
- (e) Designing coordinating and providing grant activities based on residents' needs and the local labor market; and
- (f) Monitoring the progress of program participants and evaluating the overall success of the program. A portion of grant funds should be reserved to ensure

that evaluations can be completed for all participants who received training through this program. For more information on how to measure performance, please see Rating Factor 5 in the "Application Review Information" section of this NOFA.

- (2) Staff Training.
- (3) Long Distance Travel subject to funding restrictions.
- (4) Lease or rental of space for program activities, but only under the following conditions:
 - (i) The lease must be for existing facilities not requiring rehabilitation or construction;
 - (ii) No repairs or renovations of the property may be undertaken with Federal funds; and
 - (iii) Properties in the Coastal Barrier Resources System designated under the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501) cannot be leased or rented with Federal Funds.

(5) Stipends. Stipends are an eligible use of grant funds. Stipends may be used for reasonable out-of-pocket costs. Stipends may be used to reimburse such things as local transportation to and from job training and job interviews, supplemental educational materials, and child care expenses. Stipends must be tied to residents' successful performance and regular attendance.

(6) Hiring of Residents. Grant funds may also be used to hire a resident(s) as program staff.

- (7) Supportive Services.
 - (a) After school programs for school-age children to include tutoring, remedial training, educational programming using computers.
 - (b) Provision of information on the Earned Income Tax Credit Program, Food Stamps, Child Tax Credit Program, Medicaid, the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), Student Loan Interest Deduction, tribal welfare programs, and other benefit programs that can assist individuals and families to make a successful transition from welfare to work.

(c) Transportation costs as necessary to enable participating families to receive services or commute to training or employment including purchase, rental or lease of a vehicle for the grantee and limited in use for program purposes.

- (d) Child-care while residents are participating in program-related activities.
 - (e) Parenting courses.
 - (f) Nutrition courses.
 - (g) Health care information and services including referrals to mental health providers, alcohol and other drug abuse treatment programs.
 - (h) English as a second language (ESL) classes.

(i) Housekeeping courses.
 (j) Creating and maintaining linkages to local social service agencies, such as employment agencies, health departments, transportation agencies, economic/community development agencies, community colleges, recreational and cultural services, and other community organizations such as Boys & Girls Clubs, 4H-Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.

(8) Hiring or otherwise retaining other direct services staff as necessary for program activities.

(9) Evaluation.

(10) Administrative Costs.

Administrative costs may include, but are not limited to, purchase of furniture, office equipment and supplies, program outreach, printing and postage, local travel, utilities, and lease or rental of space for program activities (subject to lease restrictions above). Administrative costs may not be used to pay for salaries of any kind. To the maximum extent practicable, when leasing space or purchasing equipment or supplies, business opportunities should be provided to businesses under Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968. Administrative costs must not exceed 10 percent of the total grant amount requested from HUD.

2. Threshold Requirements

Applicants must respond to each threshold requirement clearly and thoroughly by following the instructions below. If your application fails one threshold requirement (regardless of the type of threshold) it will be considered a failed application and will not receive consideration for funding.

a. *Match*. All applicants are required to have in place a firmly committed 25 percent match in cash or in-kind donations as defined in this NOFA. Joint applicants must together have at least a 25 percent match. Applicants who do not demonstrate the minimum 25 percent match will fail this threshold requirement and will not receive further consideration for funding. If you are applying for more than one ROSS grant (*i.e.* ROSS-Elderly), you must use different sources of match donations for each grant application and you must indicate which additional ROSS grant(s) you are applying for by attaching an additional page to HUD budget form 424-CBW stating the sources and amounts of each of your match contributions for this application as well as any other HUD programs to which you are applying. Match to be used for ineligible activities will not be accepted. Match donations must be firmly committed which means that the amount of match resources and their

dedication to ROSS-funded activities must be explicit, in writing, and signed by a person authorized to make the commitment. Letters of commitment, memoranda of understanding (MOU), or tribal resolution must be on organization letterhead, and signed by a person authorized to make the stated commitment whether it be in cash or in-kind services. The letters of commitment/MOUs/tribal resolutions must indicate the total dollar value of the commitment and be dated between the publication date of this NOFA and the application deadline published in this NOFA, or amended deadline, and indicate how the commitment will relate to the proposed program. If the commitment is in-kind, the letters should explain exactly what services or material will be provided. The commitment must be available at time of award. Applicants proposing to use their own, non-ROSS grant funds to meet the match requirement in whole or in part, must also include a letter of commitment indicating the type of match (cash or in-kind) and how the match will be used. Please see the General Section for instructions for submitting the required letters with your electronic application.

Committed amounts in excess of the 25 percent of the requested grant amount may be considered as leveraged funds for higher points under Rating Factor 4 (described in the "Application Review Information" section of this NOFA).

(1) The value of volunteer time and services shall be computed by using the normal professional rate for the local area or the national minimum wage rate of \$5.15 per hour (Note: applicants may not count their staff time toward the match);

(2) In order for HUD to determine the value of any donated material, equipment, staff time, building, or lease, your application must provide a letter from the organization making the donation stating the value of the contribution.

(3) Other resources/services that can be committed include: In-kind services provided to the applicant; funds from Federal sources (not including ROSS funds) as allowed by statute, including, for example, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) funds; funds from any state or local government sources; and funds from private contributions. Applicants may also partner with other program funding recipients to coordinate the use of resources in the target area.

b. *Past Performance.* HUD's field offices will evaluate data provided by

applicants as well as applicants' past performance to determine whether applicants have the capacity to manage the grant for which they are applying. The area ONAP will review past performance for tribal and TDHE submissions. Field offices will evaluate the contract administrators' past performance for applicants required to have a contract administrator. In evaluating past performance HUD will look at the applicant's record of completing grant activities on time, within budget and the results achieved. Using Rating Factor 1, the field office/area ONAP will evaluate applicants' past performance. Applicants should carefully review Rating Factor 1 to ensure their application addresses each of the criteria requested therein. If applicants fail to address what is requested in Rating Factor 1, their application will fail this threshold and will not receive further consideration.

c. *Contract Administrator Partnership Agreement.* All nonprofit applicants, all RAs, and PHAS troubled PHAs (as of the application publication date) are required to submit a signed Contract Administrator Partnership Agreement. The agreement must be for the entire grant term. Applicants required to have a Contract Administrator Partnership Agreement that fail to submit one will fail this threshold requirement and will not receive further consideration for funding. See the Definitions and Program Requirements Sections of this NOFA for more information on Contract Administrators. Please see the General Section for instructions on submitting the information with your electronic application.

Troubled PHAs are not eligible to be contract administrators. Grant writers who assist applicants with preparing their ROSS applications are also ineligible to be contract administrators. For more information on contract administrators, see the section "Program Requirements."

d. *Letters of Support for Nonprofit Applicants.*

(1) All nonprofit applicants must include one or more letters of support from resident associations (RAs), Resident Advisory Boards (RABs), local civic organizations, or units of local government. In the event that RAs are inactive, or that applicants submit letters of support from other organizations such as RABs, nonprofit applicants must also submit letters from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs indicating support for their application. All letters of support must be signed by an authorized representative of the supporting organization and dated

within two months of the application deadline published in this NOFA.

(2) Nonprofit applicants that do receive support from resident associations must submit form HUD-52754 "List of Resident Associations Supporting Nonprofit Applicants." Submitting this form is not applicable where RAs are inactive or where applicants do not submit letters of support from RAs.

(3) In cases where nonprofit organizations are applying to serve tribes/TDHEs, nonprofit applicants must submit letters of support from tribes/TDHEs. Nonprofit organizations must also use form HUD-52754 to list which tribes/TDHEs support their application.

(4) Letters of support from RAs or RABs must describe to what extent they are familiar with the nonprofit applicant and indicate their support and understanding of the nonprofit organization's application. Letters from RAs/RABs must include contact information and the name and title of the person authorized to sign for the organization and should, whenever possible, be on RA/RAB letterhead. If RA/RAB letterhead is not available, the letter may be submitted on PHA letterhead.

(5) Letters of support from civic organizations or units of local government must describe to what extent they are familiar with the nonprofit applicant and which programs the nonprofit applicant has operated or managed in the community that are similar to the applicant's proposal. Such letters of support must include contact information and the name and title of the person authorized to sign for the organization. The letter should be on organization letterhead.

(6) All nonprofit applicants that do not provide letters of support from resident associations must provide letters of support from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs with jurisdiction over the developments the applicant proposes to serve. Letters from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs must describe the extent to which the nonprofit applicant is familiar with the needs of the community to be served, which programs the nonprofit applicant has operated or managed in the community that are similar to the applicant's proposal, and whether the nonprofit organization has the capacity to implement its proposed program. Letters from PHAs or tribes/TDHEs must also list the names of the developments to be served, the number of occupied conventional family or elderly/disabled public housing units (depending on the grant category) in those developments, certify that the units are conventional

public housing, and identify the ROSS grant category to which the nonprofit organization is applying. PHA or tribe/TDHE letters of support must be signed by the Executive Director, tribal leader, or authorized designee and must be on PHA or tribe/TDHE letterhead. Please see the General Section for instructions for submitting the required letters with your electronic application.

(7) Applications from nonprofit organizations, which do not submit the information requested in this section will fail this threshold requirement and will not be considered for funding.

e. *Nonprofit status.* All nonprofit applicants must submit their IRS determination letter to prove their nonprofit (e.g., 501(c)(3)) status.

Applicants that fail to submit this letter will fail this threshold requirement and will not be considered for funding. Please see the General Section for instructions for submitting the required documentation with your electronic application.

f. *Minimum Score for All Fundable Applications.* Applications that pass all threshold requirements and go through the ranking and rating process, must receive a minimum score of 75 in order to be considered for funding.

g. *General Section Thresholds.* All applicants will be subject to all Thresholds requirements listed in the General Section.

h. *The Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number Requirement.* Refer to the General Section for information regarding the DUNS requirement. You will need to obtain a DUNS number to receive an award from HUD.

3. Program Requirements

a. *Contract Administrator.* The contract administrator must assure that the financial management system and procurement procedures that will be in place during the grant term will fully comply with either 24 CFR part 84 or 85, as appropriate. CAs are expressly forbidden from accessing HUD's Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS) and submitting vouchers on behalf of grantees. Contract administrators must also assist grantees to meet HUD's reporting requirements. Contract administrators may be: Local housing agencies; community-based organizations such as community development corporations (CDCs), churches, temples, synagogues, mosques; nonprofit organizations; state/regional associations and organizations. Troubled PHAs are not eligible to be contract administrators. Grant writers who assist applicants prepare their applications are also ineligible to be

contract administrators. Organizations that the applicant proposes to use as the contract administrator must not violate or be in violation of other conflicts of interest as defined in 24 CFR part 84 and 24 CFR part 85.

b. *Requirements Applicable to All Applicants.* All applicants, lead and non-lead, should refer to "Other Requirements and Procedures Applicable to All Programs" of the General Section for requirements pertaining specifically to procurement of recovered materials and for information regarding other requirements to which they may be subject.

4. Number of Applications Permitted

Applicants may desire to provide a broad range of services supported by grants from a number of ROSS funding categories. Applicants may submit more than one application only based on the criteria below:

a. *General.* Applicants may submit up to one application for each ROSS funding category (i.e., one application for ROSS-Elderly/Persons with Disabilities, one application for ROSS-Family-Homeownership, etc.), except in the case of nonprofits. Nonprofit organizations may submit more than one application per ROSS funding category provided they will be serving residents of distinct PHAs or Tribes/TDHEs.

b. *More than one application per development.* Only one application per funding category will be funded for a particular development. For example, if multiple applicants apply for ROSS-Family-Homeownership for the same development, only the highest scoring application will be considered for award. If multiple applicants are interested in providing services to a development and the services are funded under the same ROSS funding category, it is suggested the applicants work together to submit one application on behalf of the development.

c. *Joint applications.* Two or more applicants may join together to submit a joint application for proposed grant activities. Joint applications must designate a lead applicant. The lead applicant must be registered with Grants.gov and submit the application using the Grants.gov portal. Lead applicants are subject to all threshold requirements. Non-lead applicants are subject to the following threshold requirements as applicable:

- (1) Letters of support for nonprofit applicants;
- (2) Evidence of nonprofit status as outlined under the section covering threshold requirements; and

(3) Threshold requirements outlined in Section III. C. of the General Section.

Joint applications may include PHAs, RAs, Tribes/TDHEs, and nonprofit organizations on behalf of resident organizations. Joint applications involving nonprofit organizations must also provide evidence of resident support or support from local civic organizations or from units of local government. PHAs, tribes/TDHEs, and resident organizations that are part of a joint application may not also submit separate applications as sole applicants under this NOFA.

Note: The lead applicant will determine the maximum funding amount the applicants are eligible to receive.

5. Eligible Participants

All ROSS Family and Homeownership program participants must be residents of conventional public housing or NAHASDA-assisted housing. Participants in the Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program (non-Housing Choice Voucher FSS Program) are also eligible to participate in activities funded under ROSS.

6. Eligible Developments

Only conventional Public and Indian housing developments and NAHASDA-assisted may be served by ROSS grant funds. Other housing/developments, including, but not limited to private housing, federally insured housing, federally subsidized or assisted (i.e., assisted under Section 8, Section 202, Section 811, Section 236), and others are not eligible to participate in ROSS.

7. Energy Star

HUD has adopted a wide-ranging energy action plan for improving energy efficiency in all program areas. As a first step toward implementing the energy plan, HUD, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DoE) have signed a joint partnership to promote energy efficiency in HUD's affordable housing efforts and programs. The purpose of the Energy Star partnership is to promote energy efficiency of the affordable housing stock, and to help protect the environment. Applicants providing housing assistance or counseling services are encouraged to promote Energy Star materials and practices, as well as buildings constructed to Energy Star standards, to both homebuyers and renters. Program activities can include developing Energy Star promotional and information materials, outreach to low- and moderate-income renters and buyers on the benefits and savings when

using Energy Star products and appliances, and promoting the designation of community buildings and homes as Energy Star compliant. For further information about Energy Star, see <http://www.energystar.gov> or call 888-STAR-YES (888-782-7937) or for the hearing-impaired, 888-588-9920 (TTY).

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address To Request an Application Package

Copies of the published NOFAs and application forms for HUD programs announced through NOFA may be downloaded from the grants.gov Web site at <http://www.grants.gov/Find>; if you have difficulty accessing the information you may receive customer support from Grants.gov by calling their Support Desk at (800) 518-GRANTS, or sending an email to support@grants.gov. You may request general information, from the NOFA Information Center (800-HUD-8929) or 800-HUD-2209 (TTY) between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday, except on federal holidays. When requesting information, please refer to the name of the program you are interested in. The NOFA Information Center opens for business simultaneously with the publication of the SuperNOFA. You can also obtain information on this NOFA from HUD's Web site at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. *Application Format Information for All Applicants.* Applicants should make sure to include all requested information, according to the instructions found in this NOFA and where applicable, in the General Section. This will help ensure a fair and accurate review of your application.

2. Content and Format for Submission

a. Content of Application.

Applicants must write narrative responses to each of the rating factors, which follow this section. Applicants will be evaluated on whether their responses demonstrate that they have the necessary capacity to successfully manage the proposed program. Applicants should ensure that their narratives are written clearly and concisely so that HUD reviewers, who may not be familiar with the ROSS program, may fully understand your proposal.

b. Format of Application.

(1) Applications may not exceed 35 narrative pages. Narrative pages must be

typed, double-spaced, numbered, use Times New Roman font style, one inch margins and font size 12. Supporting documentation, required forms, and certifications will not be counted toward the 35 narrative page limit. However, applicants should make every effort to submit only what is necessary in terms of supporting documentation. Please see the General Section for instructions on how to submit supporting documentation with your electronic application.

(2) A checklist is provided to ensure applicants submit all required forms and information. Applicants are not required to submit the checklist but should review it to ensure that they have submitted a complete application. (**Note:** Applicants who receive a waiver to submit paper applications, must submit their applications in a three-ring binder, with TABS dividing the sections as indicated below. When submitting electronically, you do not need to submit these in TABS. Be sure to name each attachment clearly.) Copies of the forms may be downloaded with the application package and instructions from www.Grants.gov/Apply or from the following Web site: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa06/snofaforms.cfm>.

TAB 1: Required Forms from the General Section and other ROSS forms:

1. Acknowledgement of Application Receipt (HUD-2993), for paper application submissions only (you must have an approved waiver to submit a paper application);
2. Application for Federal Financial Assistance (SF-424);
3. SF-424 Supplement, Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants;
4. Questionnaire for HUD's Initiative on Removal of Regulatory Barriers (HUD-27300);
5. ROSS Fact Sheet (HUD-52751);
6. Grant Application Detailed Budget (HUD-424-CB);
7. Grant Application Detailed Budget Worksheet (HUD-424-CBW);
8. Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report (HUD-2880);
9. Certification of Consistency with RC/EZ/EC-II Strategic Plan (HUD-2990) if applicable;
10. Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan (HUD-2991) if applicable;
11. Certification of Consistency with the Indian Housing Plan if applicable (HUD-52752);
12. Certification of Resident Council Board of Election (not required for tribes/nonprofit organizations working on behalf of tribes) (HUD-52753);
- 13.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), if applicable;

13. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Continuation Sheet (SF-LLL-A), if applicable;

14. You Are Our Client Grant Applicant Survey (HUD-2994-A) (Optional);

15. Facsimile Transmittal Sheet (HUD-96011) (For use with electronic applications as the cover sheet to provide third party documentation).

TAB 2: Threshold Requirements:

1. Letters from Partners attesting to match;
2. Letter from Applicant's organization attesting to match (if applicant is contributing to match);
3. Letters of Support from Resident Associations/PHAs/tribes/TDHEs/Resident Advisory Boards/local civic organizations and/or units of local government (Threshold requirement for all nonprofit applicants);
4. Chart of Resident Associations Participating (required for nonprofit applicants but not applicable to applications from tribes/TDHEs.) (HUD-52754);
5. IRS nonprofit determination letter proving 501(c)(3) status (Threshold requirement for all nonprofit applicants); and
6. Contract Administrator Partnership Agreement (required for nonprofit organizations, resident associations, and PHAS troubled PHAs) (HUD-52755).

TAB 3: Narrative for Rating Factor 1 and ROSS Program Forms:

1. Narrative;
2. Chart A: Program Staffing (HUD-52756);
3. Chart B: Applicant/Administrator Track Record (HUD-52757);
4. Resumes/Position Descriptions;
5. Statement attesting to Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership program, Section 32 or other program, if proposing activities in Category 5.

TAB 4: Narrative for Rating Factor 2.

TAB 5: Rating Factor 3:

1. Narrative;
2. Work plan (see relevant sample ROSS work plan HUD 52763).

TAB 6: Narrative for Rating Factor 4.

TAB 7: Rating Factor 5.

1. Narrative;
2. Logic Model (HUD-96010);

C. Submission Dates and Times

1. *Due Dates.* The application must be received and validated by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on the deadline date of August 8, 2006. If your waiver request is approved, the notification of approval of the waiver request will provide instructions on where to submit the paper application. See the General Section for instructions

regarding waivers to the electronic application submission requirement. If an applicant receives a waiver to the electronic application submission requirement, the application must be received by the application deadline date.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable.

E. Funding Restrictions

1. *Reimbursement for Grant Application Costs.* Grantees are prohibited from using ROSS grant funds to reimburse any costs incurred in conjunction with preparation of their ROSS application.

2. Covered Salaries.

a. *Project Coordinator.* All applicants may propose to hire a qualified project coordinator to run the program. The ROSS Family and Homeownership program will fund up to \$65,000 in combined annual salary and fringe benefits for a full-time project coordinator. Applicants may propose a part-time coordinator at a lesser salary. For audit purposes, applicants must have documentation on file demonstrating that the salary and fringe benefits of the project coordinator are comparable to similar professions in their local area.

b. *Resident Salaries.* No more than five percent of -ROSS-Family and Homeownership funds may be used to pay for resident salaries.

c. *Types of Salaries.* ROSS Family and Homeownership funds may only be used for the types of salaries described in this section according to the restrictions described herein. ROSS funds may only be used to pay for salaries of staff that provide direct services to residents. Direct services staff, for purposes of this NOFA, are defined as applicant personnel or subcontractors who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application e.g., housing and credit counselors, case managers, job trainers, childcare providers, among other positions. ROSS funds may not be used to pay for salaries for any other kind of staff.

3. *Administrative Costs.* For all applicants, administrative costs may include, but are not limited to, purchase of furniture, office equipment and supplies, program outreach, printing and postage, local travel, utilities, and lease or rental of space for program activities (subject to restrictions on leasing—See Eligible Activities section of this NOFA.). Administrative costs may not be used to pay for salaries of any kind. Administrative costs must not

exceed 10 percent of the total grant amount requested from HUD.

Administrative costs must adhere to OMB Circular A-87 or A-122 as appropriate. Please use HUD-424-CBW to itemize your administrative costs.

4. *Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs).* ROSS Family and Homeownership funds can be used as matching funds for ISAs but no more than 20 percent of total grant funds may be used for this purpose.

5. *Stipends.* No more than \$200 of the grant award may be used per participant per month for stipends for active trainees and program participants. Stipends may only be used to reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses related to participation in training and other program-related activities. Receipts for such expenses must be provided by the resident in order to obtain reimbursement. Stipends are not considered an administrative expense and therefore are not subject to the 10 percent limitation on administrative costs.

6. *Funding Requests in Excess of Maximum Grant Amount.* Applicants that request funding in excess of the maximum grant amount which they are eligible to receive will be given consideration only for the maximum grant for which they are eligible. If a grant is awarded, the grantee will work with the Field Office or Area ONAP to re-apportion the grant funds for eligible activities.

7. *Ineligible Activities/Costs.* Grant funds may not be used for ineligible activities. The following are ineligible activities/costs:

a. Payment of wages and/or salaries to participants for receiving supportive services and/or training programs (this does not include stipends);

b. Purchase, lease, or rental of land;

c. New construction, costs for construction materials;

d. Rehabilitation or physical improvements;

e. Vehicle insurance and/or maintenance;

f. Entertainment costs;

g. Purchasing food;

h. Payment of wages and/or salaries to doctors, nurses or other staff (including health aids or companions) in relation to medical services provided to residents;

i. Purchase of non-prescription or prescription medications;

j. Down payment assistance (NOTE: Participants may use their ISAs for this purpose);

k. Revolving loan funds;

l. Costs which exceed limits identified in the NOFA, for the following: Project Coordinator, resident salaries, ISAs,

stipends, administrative expenses, and long distance travel;

m. Cost of application preparation;

n. Scholarships for degree programs;

o. Salaries for staff that are not direct services staff. Direct services staff, for purposes of this NOFA, are defined as applicant personnel or subcontractors who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application, e.g., case managers, job trainers, childcare providers, among other positions.

p. Purchase of space.

8. ROSS funds cannot be used to hire or pay for the services of a Contract Administrator.

9. *Other Budgetary Restrictions.* Some long distance travel may be necessary during the term of the grant in order for professional grant staff to attend training conferences for ROSS grantees. Long distance travel costs for grant program staff may not exceed \$5,000 for the life of the grant and must receive prior approval from the grantee's local HUD field office or area ONAP.

F. Other Submission Requirements

1. All applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via Grants.gov unless they request and are approved by HUD for a waiver of that requirement. Please refer to the General Section for information on how to submit your application and all attachments electronically via Grants.gov.

2. *Proof of Timely Submission.* Please see the General Section for this information. Applicants that fail to meet the deadline for application receipt will not receive funding consideration.

3. *For Waiver Recipients Only.* Applicants who have received waivers to submit paper applications (see the General Section for more information) must submit their applications to: HUD Grants Management Center, Mail Stop: ROSS Family and Homeownership, 501 School Street, SW., 8th floor, Washington, DC 20024.

4. *Number of Copies.* Only applicants receiving a waiver to the electronic submission requirement may submit a paper copy application. Paper applications must be submitted in triplicate (one original and two identical copies). For all applicants with a waiver (including tribal and TDHE applicants), the original and one identical copy must be sent to the Grants Management Center and an identical copy must be sent to your local Field Office or Area ONAP in accordance with the submission and timely receipt requirements described in the General

Section. All paper applications must be received by the deadline date.

V. Application Review Information

A. Criteria

1. *Factors for Award Used to Evaluate and Rate Applications to the ROSS program.* The factors for rating and ranking applicants and maximum points for each factor are provided below. The maximum number of points available for this program is 102. This includes two RC/EZ/EC-II bonus points. The SuperNOFA contains a certification that must be completed in order for the applicant to be considered for the RC/EZ/EC-II bonus points. A listing of federally designated RCs, EZs, and EC-IIs is available at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>. The agency certifying to RC/EZ/EC-II status must be contained in the listing of RC/EZ/EC-II organizations on HUD's Web site at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>.

Note: Applicants should carefully review each rating factor before writing a response. Applicants' narratives should be as descriptive as possible, ensuring that every requested item is addressed. Applicants should make sure their narratives thoroughly address the Rating Factors below. Applicants should include all requested information, according to the instructions found in this NOFA. This will help ensure a fair and accurate application review.

a. Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Staff (25 Points)

This factor addresses whether the applicant has the organizational capacity and resources necessary to successfully implement the proposed activities within the grant period. In rating this factor HUD will consider the extent to which the proposal demonstrates that the applicant will have qualified and experienced staff dedicated to administering the program.

(1) *Proposed Program Staffing* (7 Points).

(a) *Staff Experience* (4 Points). The knowledge and experience of the proposed project coordinator, staff, and partners in planning and managing programs for which funding is being requested. Experience will be judged in terms of recent, relevant and successful experience of proposed staff to undertake eligible program activities. In rating this factor, HUD will consider experience within the last 5 years to be recent; experience pertaining to the specific activities being proposed to be relevant; and experience producing specific accomplishments to be successful. The more recent the

experience and the more experience proposed staff members who work on the project have in successfully conducting and completing similar activities, the greater the number of points applicants will receive for this rating factor. The following information should be provided in order to provide HUD an understanding of proposed staff's experience and capacity:

(i) The number of staff years (one staff year = 2080 hours) to be allocated to the proposed program by each employee or expert as well as each of their roles in the program;

(ii) The staff's relevant educational background and/or work experience; and

(iii) Relevant and successful experience running programs whose activities are similar to the eligible program activities described in the grant application.

(b) *Organizational Capacity* (3 Points). Applicants will be evaluated based on whether they or their partners have sufficient qualified personnel to deliver the proposed activities in a timely and effective fashion. In order to enhance or supplement capacity, applicants should provide evidence of partnerships with nonprofit organizations or other organizations that have experience providing supportive services to typically underserved populations. Applicants' narratives must describe their ability to immediately begin the proposed work program. Provide resumes and position descriptions (where staff is not yet hired) for all key personnel. (Resumes/position descriptions do not count toward the 35-page limit.)

(2) *Past Performance of Applicant/Contract Administrator* (6 Points).

(a) Applicants' past experience may include, but is not limited to, running and managing programs aimed at assisting residents of low-income housing to achieve housing and economic self-sufficiency

(b) Applicants' narratives must indicate past grants they received and managed, the grant amounts, and grant terms (years) of the grants, which they are counting toward past experience.

(c) Applicants' narratives must describe how they (or their *Contract Administrator*) successfully implemented past grant programs designed to promote resident self-sufficiency, moving from welfare to work, and/or helping residents move to market rate rental housing or homeownership.

(d) Applicants will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

(i) Achievement of specific measurable outcomes and objectives in

terms of benefits gained by participating residents. Applicants should describe results their programs have obtained, such as:

—Reduced welfare dependency, higher incomes, higher rates of employment, increased savings, moving from subsidized housing to market rate rental housing; and for Category 5,

—Number of families in homeownership counseling pipeline, rates of homeownership achieved through training programs.

(ii) Description of success in attracting and keeping residents involved in past grant-funded training programs. HUD wants to see that applicants' grant-funded programs benefited a significant numbers of residents;

(iii) Description of timely and accurate expenditure of program funding throughout the term of past grants. This means regular (i.e., quarterly) and accurate drawdowns throughout the life of the grant, with all funds expended by the end of the grant term;

(iv) Description of Past Leveraging. Applicants must describe how they have created leveraging partnerships for funding or in-kind services for previous projects, the extent of the leveraging partnership and how leveraging and partnerships benefited program participants.

(3) *Program Administration and Fiscal Management* (12 Points).

(a) *Program Administration and Accountability* (6 Points). Applicants should describe how they will manage the program; how HUD can be sure that there is program accountability; and provide a description of proposed staff's roles and responsibilities. Applicants should also describe how grant staff and partners will report to the project coordinator and other senior staff.

(b) *Fiscal Management* (6 Points). In rating this factor, applicants' skills and experience in fiscal management will be evaluated. If applicants have had any audit or material weakness findings in the past five years, they will be evaluated on how well they have addressed them. Applicants must provide the following:

(i) A complete description of their fiscal management structure, including fiscal controls currently in place including those of a Contract Administrator for applicants required to have a Contract Administrator (i.e., PHAS troubled PHAs, resident associations, and nonprofit applicants);

(ii) Applicants must list any audit findings or material weaknesses in the past five years (HUD Inspector General,

management review, fiscal, etc.), and what has been done to address them;

(iii) For applicants who are required to have a Contract Administrator, describe the skills and experience the Contract Administrator has in managing federal funds.

b. Rating Factor 2: Need/Extent of the Problem (10 Points)

This factor addresses the extent to which there is a need for funding the proposed program. In responding to this factor, applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which they describe and document the level of need for their proposed activities and the urgency for meeting the need.

In responding to this factor, applicants must include:

(1) *Socioeconomic Profile* (3 points). A thorough socioeconomic profile of the eligible residents to be served by the program, including education levels, income levels, the number of single-parent families, economic statistics for the local area, etc.

(2) *Demonstrated Link Between Proposed Activities and Local Need* (7 points). Applicants' narratives must demonstrate a clear relationship between proposed activities, community needs and the purpose of the program funding in order for points to be awarded for this factor.

c. Rating Factor 3: Soundness of Approach (30 Points)

This factor addresses both the quality and cost-effectiveness of applicants' proposed work plan. The narrative and work plan must indicate a clear relationship between proposed activities and intended outcomes, the targeted population's needs, and the purpose of the program funding. Applicants' proposed activities must address HUD's policy priorities outlined in this Rating Factor.

In rating this factor HUD will consider:

(1) *Quality of the Work Plan* (18 points). This factor evaluates both the applicant's work plan and budget, which will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

(a) *Specific Services and/or Activities* (10 points). Applicants' narratives must describe the specific services, course curricula, and activities they plan to offer and who will be responsible for each. In addition to the narrative, applicants must also provide a work plan, which must list the specific services, activities, and outcomes they expect. The proposed program narrative and work plan must show a logical order of activities and progress and must tie to the outcomes and outputs

applicants identify in the Logic Model (see Rating Factor 5). Please see a sample work plan in the Appendix. Applicants' narratives must explain how their proposed activities will:

(i) Involve community partners in the delivery of services (4 points);

(ii) Offer comprehensive services (versus a small range of services) geared toward achieving the following (6 points):

—Enhancing economic opportunities for residents leading to economic self-sufficiency and homeownership or other housing self-sufficiency;

(b) *Feasibility and Demonstrable Benefits* (3 points). This factor examines whether applicants' work plan are logical, feasible and likely to achieve its stated purpose during the term of the grant. HUD's desire is to fund applications that will quickly produce demonstrable results and advance the purposes of the ROSS program.

(i) *Timeliness*. This subfactor evaluates whether applicants' work plans demonstrate that their projects are ready to be implemented shortly after grant award, but not to exceed three months following the execution of the grant agreement. The work plan must indicate time frames and deadlines for accomplishing major activities. (1 point).

(ii) *Description of the problem and solution*. The work plan will be evaluated based on how well applicants' proposed activities address the needs described in Rating Factor 2. (2 points).

(c) *Budget Appropriateness/Efficient Use of Grant* (5 Points). The score in this factor will be based on the following:

(i) *Justification of expenses*. Applicants will be evaluated based on whether their expenses are reasonable and thoroughly explained, and support the objectives of their proposal.

(ii) *Budget Efficiency*. Applicants will be evaluated based on whether their application requests funds commensurate with the level of effort necessary to accomplish their goals and anticipated results.

(d) *Ineligible Activities*. Two points will be deducted for each ineligible activity proposed in the application, as identified in Section IV(E). For example, you will lose 2 points if you propose costs that exceed the limits identified in the NOFA for a Project Coordinator; or you will lose 2 points if you propose paying for salaries for staff that are not direct services staff.

(2) *Addressing HUD's Policy Priorities* (10 points). HUD wants to improve the quality of life for those living in distressed communities. HUD's grant programs are a vehicle through which

long-term, positive change can be achieved at the community level. Applicants' narratives and work plans will be evaluated based on how well they meet the following HUD policy priorities:

(i) *Improving the Quality of Life in Our Nation's Communities* (2 points). In order to receive points in this category, applicants' narrative and/or work plan must indicate the types of activities, service, and training programs applicants will offer which can help residents successfully transition from welfare to work and earn higher wages.

(ii) *Providing Increased Homeownership and Rental Opportunities for Low- and Moderate-Income Persons, Persons with Disabilities, the Elderly, Minorities, and Families with Limited English Proficiency* (**Note:** Only applicants proposing Category 5—Homeownership activities are eligible for these points.) (2 points). In order to receive points in this category, applicants' narratives and/or work plans must indicate the types of activities and training programs they will offer which can help residents successfully transition to homeownership. Applicants that indicate that they have existing linkages to an existing homeownership program such as, for PHAs, Housing Choice Voucher-Homeownership, Section 32, or homeownership programs and resources offered by other organizations or state or local homeownership programs or for Tribes/TDHEs, programs such as the Mutual Help Homeownership Opportunity Program, the Section 184 Program, and homeownership programs developed under the Indian Housing Block Grant Program such as mortgage assistance, must provide a specific statement attesting to these linkages and indicating the minimum number of homeownership opportunities (e.g., number of HCV-Homeownership vouchers or number of homes in the Section 32 program that will be dedicated to ROSS participants) that will be provided annually to residents successfully completing the requirements of the programs funded by this NOFA.

(iii) *Providing Full and Equal Access to Grassroots Faith-Based and Other Community-Based Organizations in HUD Program Implementation* (4 points). HUD encourages applicants to partner with grassroots organizations, e.g., civic organizations, grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations that are not usually effectively utilized. These grassroots organizations have a strong history of providing vital community services

such as developing first-time homeownership programs, creating economic development programs, providing job training and other supportive services. In order to receive points under this factor, applicants' narratives and/or work plans must describe how applicants will work with these organizations and what types of services they will provide.

(iv) Policy Priority for Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing Through the Removal of Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing (up to 2 points).

Under this policy priority, higher rating points are available to (1) governmental applicants that are able to demonstrate successful efforts in removing regulatory barriers to affordable housing, and (2) nongovernmental applicants that are associated with jurisdictions that have undertaken successful efforts in removing barriers. For applicants to obtain the policy priority points for efforts to successfully remove regulatory barriers, applicants would have to complete form HUD 27300, "Questionnaire for HUD's Initiative on Removal of Regulatory Barriers." A copy of HUD's Notice entitled America's Affordable Communities Initiative, HUD's Initiative on Removal of Regulatory Barriers: Announcement of Incentive Criteria on Barrier Removal in HUD's 2004 Competitive Funding Allocations" can be found on HUD's Web site at <http://www.hud.gov/grants/index.cfm>. The information and requirements contained in HUD's regulatory barriers policy priority apply to this FY-2006 NOFA. A description of the policy priority and a copy of form HUD-27300 can be found in the application package posted on www.Grants.gov. Applicants are encouraged to read the Notice as well as the General Section to obtain an understanding of this policy priority and how it can impact their score. A limited number of questions expressly request the applicant to provide brief documentation with their response. Other questions require that for each affirmative statement made, the applicant must supply a reference, URL, or a brief statement indicating where the back-up information may be found, and a point of contact, including a telephone number and/or email address. The electronic copy of the HUD 27300 has space to identify a URL or reference that the material is being scanned and attached to the application as part of the submission or faxed to HUD following the facsimile submission instructions.

Economic Opportunities for Low- and Very Low-Income Persons (Section 3) (2 Points)

You will receive 2 points if your application demonstrates that you will implement Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701u) (Economic Opportunities for Low- and Very Low-Income Persons in Connection with assisted Projects) and its implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 135 in connection with this grant, if awarded. Information about Section 3 can be found at HUD's Section 3 Web site at www.hud.gov/fhe/sec3over.html. Your application must describe how you will implement Section 3 through the proposed grant activities. You must state that you will, to the greatest extent feasible, direct training, employment, and other economic opportunities to:

- (a) Low- and very low-income persons, particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing, and
- (b) Business concerns which provide economic opportunities to low- and very low-income persons.

d. Rating Factor 4: Leveraging Resources (20 Points)

This factor addresses the applicant's ability to secure community resources that can be combined with HUD's grant resources to achieve program purposes. Applicants are required to create partnerships with organizations that can help achieve their program's goals. PHAs are required by section 12(d)(7) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 entitled "Cooperation Agreements for Economic Self-Sufficiency Activities" to make best efforts to enter into such agreements with relevant state or local agencies. In rating this factor, HUD will look at the extent to which applicants partner, coordinate and leverage their services with other organizations serving the same or similar populations.

Applicants must have at least a 25 percent cash or in-kind match. The match is a threshold requirement. Joint applicants must together have at least a 25 percent match. Applicants who do not demonstrate the minimum 25 percent match will fail the threshold requirement and will not receive further consideration for funding. Leveraging in excess of the 25 percent of the grant amount will receive a higher point value. In evaluating this factor HUD will consider the extent to which applicants have partnered with other entities to secure additional resources, which will increase the effectiveness of the proposed program activities. Match proposed to be used for ineligible

activities will not be accepted. The additional resources and services must be firmly committed, must support the proposed grant activities and must, in combined amount (including in-kind contributions of personnel, space and/or equipment, and monetary contributions) equal at least 25 percent of the grant amount requested in the application. "Firmly committed" means that the amount of resources and their dedication to ROSS-funded activities must be explicit, in writing and signed by a person authorized to make the commitment. Please see the section on Threshold Requirements for more information.

Points for this factor will be awarded based on the documented evidence of partnerships and firm commitments and the ratio of requested ROSS funds to the total proposed grant budget.

Points will be assigned based on the following scale:

Percentage of Match Points Awarded

- 25—50—5 points (with partnerships) 3 points (without partnerships);
- 51—75—10 points (with partnerships) 8 points (without partnerships);
- 76 or above—15 points (with partnerships) 13 points (without partnerships);
- 76 or above—20 points (with partnerships) 18 points (without partnerships).

e. Rating Factor 5: Achieving Results and Program Evaluation (15 Points)

(1) An important element in any supportive service program is the development and reporting of performance measures and outcomes. This factor emphasizes HUD's determination to ensure that applicants develop performance and outcome measures that are focused on residents' achieving economic and housing self-sufficiency—reducing and eliminating dependency on any type of subsidized housing or welfare assistance. Additionally, achieving outcomes and accurate evaluation will assist HUD in meeting its commitment to federal requirements for accountability. Applicants must demonstrate how they propose to measure their success and outcomes as they relate to the Department's Strategic Plan.

(2) HUD requires ROSS applicants to develop an effective, quantifiable, outcome-oriented plan for measuring performance and determining that goals have been met. Applicants must use the Logic Model form HUD-96010 for this purpose. The narrative describes how the measurement tools are used to collect and verify reported data and to modify the program if goals are not being met.

(3) Applicants must establish interim benchmarks, or outputs, for their proposed program that lead to the ultimate achievement of outcomes. "Outputs" are the direct products of a program's activities. Examples of outputs are: The number of eligible families that participate in supportive services, the number of new services provided, the number of residents receiving counseling, or the number of households using a technology center. Outputs should produce outcomes for your program. "Outcomes" are benefits accruing to the residents, families and/or communities during or after participation in the ROSS program. Outcomes are not the development or delivery of services or program activities but the results of the services delivered or program activities—the ultimate results of the program. Applicants must clearly identify the outcomes to be achieved and measured. Examples of outcomes are: Increasing homeownership rates, increasing residents' financial stability (e.g., increasing assets of a household through savings), or increasing employment stability (e.g., whether persons assisted obtain or retain employment for one or two years after job training completion).

(4) This rating factor requires that applicants identify program outputs, outcomes, and performance indicators that will allow applicants to measure their performance. Performance indicators should be objectively quantifiable and measure actual achievements against anticipated achievements. Applicants' narratives, work plans, and Logic Models should identify what applicants are going to measure, how they are going to measure it, and the steps they have in place to make adjustments to their work plan and management practices if performance targets begin to fall short of established benchmarks and time frames. Applicants' proposals must also show how they will measure the performance of partners and affiliates. Applicants must include the standards, data sources, and measurement methods they will use to measure performance.

(Applicants will be evaluated based on how comprehensively they propose to measure their program's outcomes.)

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Review Process

Four types of reviews will be conducted: A screening to determine if you are eligible to apply for funding under the ROSS Family and Homeownership grant program; whether your application submission is complete, on time and meets threshold;

a review by the field office (or area ONAP office) to evaluate past performance; and a technical review to rate your application based on the five rating factors provided in this NOFA.

2. Selection Process for All Grant Categories and All Applicants

Twenty-five percent (25%) of funds will be set aside for Resident Associations and all qualifying Resident Association applications will be funded first, up to 25% of the funding amount. The selection process is designed to achieve geographic diversity of grant awards throughout the country. For each grant category, HUD will first select the highest ranked application from each of the ten federal regions and DPONAP for funding. After this "round," HUD will select the second highest ranked application in each of the ten federal regions and DPONAP for funding (the second round). HUD will continue this process with the third, fourth, and so on, highest ranked applications in each federal region and DPONAP until the last complete round is selected for funding. If available funds exist to fund some but not all eligible applications in the next round, HUD will make awards to those remaining applications in rank order (by score) regardless of region and DPONAP and will fully fund as many as possible with remaining funds. If remaining funds in one grant category are too small to make an award, they may be transferred to another ROSS program. If there are remaining funds in any ROSS program after all qualifying applications have been awarded, those funds may be transferred to another ROSS program.

3. Tie Scores

In the event of a tie score between two applications which target the same developments, HUD will select the application that was received first.

4. Deficiency Period

Applicants will have 14 calendar days in which to provide missing information requested from HUD. For other information on correcting deficient applications, please see the General Section.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

HUD will make announcements of grant awards after the rating and ranking process is completed. Grantees will be notified by letter and will receive instructions on what steps they must take in order to access funding and begin implementing grant activities. Applicants who are not funded will also receive letters via U.S. postal mail.

B. Debriefings

Applicants who are not funded may request a debriefing. Applicants requesting to be debriefed must send a written request to: Iredia Hutchinson, Director, Grants Management Center, 501 School Street, SW., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20024.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Environmental Impact

In accordance with 24 CFR 58.34 (a)(3) or (a)(9), 58.35(b)(2), (b)(4) or (b)(5), 50.19(b)(3), (b)(9), (b)(12), (b)(14), or (b)(15), activities under this ROSS program are categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and are not subject to environmental review under related laws and authorities.

2. Applicable Requirements

Unless specifically enumerated in this NOFA, all applicants, lead and non-lead applicants, are subject to the requirements specified in Section III.C. of the General Section. Grantees are subject to regulations and other requirements found in:

a. 24 CFR 84 "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations";

b. 24 CFR 85 "Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State, Local, and Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments";

c. 24 CFR 964 "Tenant Participation and Tenant Opportunities in Public Housing";

d. OMB Circular A-87 "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments";

e. OMB Circular A-110 "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations";

f. OMB Circular A-122 "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations"; and

g. OMB Circular A-133 "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations".

3. Economic Opportunities for Low- and Very Low-Income Persons (Section 3)

Applicants and grantees must also comply with Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, 12 U.S.C. 1701u and ensure that training, employment, and other economic opportunities shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be directed toward low and very low-income persons,

particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing and to business concerns which provide economic opportunities to low and very low-income persons.

4. Fair Housing and Civil Rights Laws

Applicants and their subrecipients must comply with all Fair Housing and Civil Rights laws, statutes, regulations, and Executive Orders as enumerated in 24 CFR 5.105(a), as applicable. Please see the General Section for more information.

D. Reporting

1. Semi-Annual Performance Reports

Grantees must submit semi-annual performance reports to the field office or area ONAP. These progress reports must include financial reports (SF-269A), and a Logic Model (HUD-96010) showing achievements to date against outputs and outcomes proposed in the application and approved by HUD. A narrative describing milestones, work plan progress, and problems encountered and methods used to address the problems to support the data in the logic model is optional. HUD anticipates that some of the reporting of financial status and grant performance will be through electronic or Internet-based submissions. Grantees must use quantifiable data to measure performance against goals and objectives outlined in their work plan. Applicants that receive awards from HUD should be prepared to report on additional measures that HUD may designate at time of award. Performance reports are due to the field office on July 30 and January 31 of each year. If reports are not received by the due date, grant funds will be suspended until reports are received. For FY2006, HUD is considering a new concept for the Logic Model. The new concept is a Return on Investment (ROI) statement.

HUD will be publishing a separate notice on the ROI concept.

2. Final Report

All grantees must submit a final report to their local field office or area ONAP that will include a financial report (SF-269A), a final Logic Model, and a narrative evaluating overall results achieved against their work plan. Grantees must use quantifiable data to measure performance against goals and objectives outlined in their work plan. The financial report must contain a summary of all expenditures made from the beginning of the grant agreement to the end of the grant agreement and must include any unexpended balances. The final Logic Model and financial report are due to the field office 90 days after the termination of the grant agreement.

3. Final Audit

Grantees that expend \$500,000 in federal funds in a given program or fiscal year are required to obtain a complete final close-out audit of the grant's financial statements by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards. A written report of the audit must be forwarded to HUD within 60 days of issuance. Grant recipients must comply with the requirements of 24 CFR 84 or 24 CFR 85 as stated in OMB Circulars A-87, A-110, and A-122, as applicable.

4. Racial and Ethnic Data

HUD requires that funded recipients collect racial and ethnic beneficiary data. HUD has adopted the Office of Management and Budget's Standards for the Collection of Racial and Ethnic Data. In view of these requirements, applicants should use form HUD-27061, Racial and Ethnic Data Reporting Form.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For questions and technical assistance, you may call the Public and Indian Housing Information and Resource Center at 800-955-2232. For persons with hearing or speech impairments, please call the toll-free Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. In the case of tribes/TDHEs, please contact HQ ONAP at 800-561-5913 or (303) 675-1600 (this is not a toll-free number).

VIII. Other Information

A. *Code of Conduct*. Please see the General Section for more information.

B. *Transfer of Funds*. If transfer of funds from any of the ROSS programs does become necessary, HUD will consider the amount of un-funded qualified applications in deciding to which program the extra funds will be transferred.

C. *Paperwork Reduction Act*. The information collection requirements contained in this document have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520) and assigned OMB control number 2577-0229. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 49.5 hours per respondent for the application. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting the data for the application. The information will be used for grantee selection and monitoring the administration of funds. Response to this request for information is required in order to receive the benefits to be derived.

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