

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
[Docket No. FR-5600-N-17-C-1]

HUD's Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Transformation Initiative:
Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration Small Research Grant Program,
Technical Correction

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, HUD.

ACTION: Notice of Technical Correction.

SUMMARY: On February 6, 2012, HUD posted a NOFA for the Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration Small Research Grants Program ("Choice Research Grants") on Grants.gov. This notice provides a technical correction to that NOFA to provide more information about research that HUD is already pursuing under contract.

DATE: The application deadline date is extended to **March 27, 2012**.

If applicants have already submitted an application to Grants.gov, they may resubmit a new application. HUD will review the last application submitted to grants.gov. When resubmitting an application, applicants must submit a complete new application including any materials previously faxed as part of the application.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions concerning the NOFA please contact Paul Joice at Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov or (202) 402-4608. This number is not toll-free. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling the Federal Relay Service at 800- 877-8339.

1. TECHNICAL CORRECTION: As published on February 6, 2012 the NOFA describes the purpose of the Choice Research Grants as the development and implementation of small scale research projects that complement the larger Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration research project ("Choice baseline research project"). This notice provides clarification about the scope of the Choice baseline research project, so that applicants for the Choice Research Grants may have a better understanding of the type of small scale research projects that would build upon and complement the Choice baseline research project. This technical correction includes the following modifications to the NOFA:

(a) On page 3, Section I.A provides background on the Choice Neighborhoods program and the Choice baseline research project. Paragraph 2 ("HUD has also established...") through the end of Section I.A ("...implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods transformation plans.") is revised to indicate that HUD intends for the Choice baseline research project to include all five implementation grant sites (Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle) and to provide additional details about the research approach. Section I.A is revised to read as follows:

Choice Neighborhoods is a new HUD initiative that builds on the experiences of HOPE VI and aims to transform entire neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into "functioning, sustainable mixed income neighborhoods with appropriate services, public assets,

transportation and access to jobs, and schools...” On August 31, 2011 HUD announced that Chicago, Boston, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle would be the initial recipients of Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants. A summary of each of these grants is available at <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=CNFY2010-2011.pdf>.

HUD is already pursuing a major research effort focused on the initial round of Choice Neighborhoods implementation grants. The objectives and key technical components of this research project (the "Choice baseline research project") are described in this section. This plan is subject to change, and the information in this section is provided to help applicants identify possible gaps in the research and opportunities to complement HUD's research related to Choice Neighborhoods. The expected outputs from the Choice baseline research project are subject to change, and applicants are not advised to propose research projects that would require those outputs as inputs.

The objectives of the Choice baseline research project are: to document baseline conditions in the five neighborhoods receiving Choice Neighborhoods implementation grants in August 2011, to describe the revitalization efforts in those neighborhoods, and to document the early outcomes of these efforts.

The key components of this research project are:

- Review of key documents guiding the transformation plan. This effort will rely primarily on materials submitted to HUD as part of the application process—materials that include information on the needs of the assisted housing development, the residents and the neighborhood; the goals, activities, and vision of the grantees; the housing investments and site plans; and the capacity of the grantees and their partners. This work will continue throughout the period of performance, but will take place primarily during 2012 and 2013.
- Interviews of HUD staff, grantee staff, and key community stakeholders. These interviews will provide insight into why the grantee chose certain strategies, including: the particular property and neighborhood targeted for redevelopment; the partnerships developed, and the roles designated to each partner organization; any policy changes implemented (whether related to housing, education, transportation, general land use, or other). The interviews will also seek to characterize the broader context in which the Choice Neighborhoods transformation plan is being implemented—the housing market conditions, the general economic situation, and any over-arching housing and community development strategies being pursued across sites. This work will take place during three site visits, scheduled for Spring of 2012, 2013, and 2014 in Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans. Site visits in San Francisco and Seattle are expected to occur on a different schedule (to be determined).
- A survey of residents of the Choice Neighborhood. This survey will develop a detailed baseline of the conditions experienced by the residents around the time that

the Choice Neighborhoods transformation begins. The survey collects information about residents' health (physical and mental); employment, income, and public assistance; education; services received, and levels of civic engagement and community involvement. The survey also asks residents about their experiences in the neighborhood, including topics such as safety, housing quality, and access to services and amenities. The survey is expected to be conducted in the Fall of 2012 in Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans. Surveys in San Francisco and Seattle are expected to occur on a different schedule (to be determined).

- Collection and analysis of quantitative and geographic data from government agencies, commercial firms, grantees to describe the target property, the assisted residents, and the surrounding neighborhood at baseline. This work will continue throughout the period of performance, but will take place primarily during 2012 and 2013.
- Collection and analysis of administrative data related to the individual residents of the Choice Neighborhood Initiative development. The survey respondents will be asked to provide consent for researchers to access their records, contingent upon signing a confidential data use agreement. This work will continue throughout the period of performance, but will take place primarily during 2012 and 2013.
- Focus groups of neighborhood residents, and separate focus groups of individuals and organizations engaged in providing services to the community as part of the transformation plan. These focus groups will provide an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to provide semi-structured feedback on the status of the transformation and how it is affecting them. The focus groups are expected to take place during site visits planned for the Spring of 2013 and 2014.
- Direct observations of neighborhood conditions, including a standardized assessment of pedestrian conditions and general physical conditions in the target development. These activities are expected to be carried out in conjunction with the residents survey (Fall 2012) and the second site visit (Spring 2013).

The work outlined above will generate three products: a baseline report, a final report, and a baseline database.

- The baseline report is expected to be complete in the Fall of 2012. It will present analysis based on document review, the first site visit, and administrative data. Particular areas of focus include: A) An initial description and critique of each grantee's explicit or implicit theory of change—that is, the reasoning that leads the grantee to expect that its activities will yield expected results—and a projection of the neighborhood that is likely to develop over the next 10 to 20 years as a consequence of the plan. B) A discussion of the planning process that took place at each site, and how the Choice Neighborhoods transformation fits into the broader local community development context. C) Analysis of the baseline conditions at the site, based on primarily administrative data and document review.

- The final report is expected to be complete in the Summer of 2014. It will present a comprehensive overview of the information gathered and the analysis conducted over the course of the Choice baseline research project. Particular areas of focus include: A) Updated analysis of baseline conditions experienced by residents of the Choice Neighborhood, based on the resident survey, additional administrative data, and additional information collected on site visits two and three. B) Discussion of progress made in implementing the transformation plan, and how that progress is being experienced by residents and stakeholders in the sites (based on focus groups and site visits). C) Cross-site analysis of common challenges, successes, and failures. D) Overall assessment of the early implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.
- The baseline database will include key information used to support the analysis conducted for the baseline and final reports. The baseline database will also enable HUD to pursue continued research on the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative over the long-term, as the program's impacts unfold. This database is expected to include information from the residents survey, augmented to the extent possible by administrative data. A great deal of the information collected under the Choice baseline research project is expected to be of a sensitive nature, and will be governed by all relevant privacy laws. The data are expected to be delivered with the final report in the Summer of 2014.

On page 3, Section I.B, paragraph 1 is revised to remove the suggestion that applicants identify research projects in specific sites. The paragraph is revised to be consistent with the above change and is revised to read as follows:

The goal of this NOFA is to fund research related to Choice Neighborhoods that complements the work already being funded by HUD through the Choice baseline research project.

Dated: 2/22/2012



Raphael W. Bostic, Assistant Secretary for
Policy Development and Research

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