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Budget Development Office Hour for FY 2022 AmeriCorps State and National
Tribal Grant applicants

24/03/2022

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13:25:47 (Music Playing)

13:33:29 >>: Good afternoon. Welcome to today's webinar, on behalf of your AmeriCorps presentation team, I thank you for joining us.

13:33:36 Before starting, let's review the event technology so you can get the most out of the session.

13:33:46 The audio for this event is broadcasting by phone and online. This event is lecture only; the microphones are muted to reduce background noise.

13:33:52 To adjust the audio through your computer, go to the bottom left of the screen, click the small arrow next to "Audio Settings" and select a speaker.

13:34:01 Some viewers get better audio when streaming, while others get better quality by phone. So, if you have any audio difficulties you may want to try a different connection method.

13:34:08 There are several Zoom features we will use today.

13:34:16 At the top of the screen, click the View Options button and select Exit Full Screen to display the Chat panel on the right side of the slides.

13:34:31 Use the Raise Hand feature if you have a technical issue and need assistance. The support team will contact you individually via Chat. Our team will use the Chat panel to provide links and resources. This feature is disabled for attendees. To ask a question, please use the Q&A panel.

13:34:38 you also be a session to ask verbal questions.

13:34:51 An icon for live captioning and English. If you wish to view captioning in Spanish, select the stream text link posted in chat shortly to view them in your browser.

13:35:03 We are recording this event, so, let's restart the recording and turn it over to Tracy, Senior grants management specialist with AmeriCorps office of grant administration.

13:35:23 >>: Thank you Jeff. Welcome to the budget development office hour for physical year 2022 AmeriCorps state and national tribal grant applicants.

13:35:31 As you heard, we are recording this webinar and we will post the session recording on the competition funding page.

13:35:41 I want to thank you for responding to the poll questions as you waited for the session to start

13:35:49, it is really helpful for those of us that are facilitating this conversation to know who is with us

13:35:56 and how familiar you are with AmeriCorps grants and the existing budget development resources.

13:36:10 It looks like most of those on the phone are potential new grantees so welcome. I also see that

13:36:15 at least three of you noted that you were applying for fixed amount operating grants

13:36:32, I do want to point out, fixed amount awards are not available to new grantees, if you truly are a new to AmeriCorps grantee, you will be eligible for

13:36:43 cost reimbursement grants. Please be aware of that if you were already moving forward with your fixed award application, you will want to change that to cost reimbursement application.

13:36:54 I do also appreciate that there is a mix of how familiar you are with the budget instructions.

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13:37:01 They are on the funding page; they will guide you through the submission of a competitive and a compliant budget.

13:37:16 I will deftly encourage you after this conversation, go into the application instructions and look into the section on the budget instructions and go through that very carefully, I also,

13:37:28 if you have not looked at the recording of the webinar, we did two weeks ago on budget development or if you weren't on that call, I would definitely encourage you to go back to that.

13:37:38 There are definitely important resources that will help you through the submission of a competitive and compliant budget.

13:37:49 That is our goal of having these conversations with you. We want you all to have the resources you need to be competitive and this process.

13:38:01 I will definitely direct you to the application instructions that have the budget instructions and to the recording of our best practices and budget development call.

13:38:17 Hopefully, between that and the conversations that we have here today you will be set to go and to submit your application that has a strong budget included and.

13:38:27 Before I open up the call for your questions, I do want to note that this office hour is specific to budget development questions.

13:38:38 If you have questions that are not about budget development, I ask you to please forward them to AmeriCorps grants@cns.gov or to the regional staff

13:38:51 contact for your state or territory, the regional contact list is shown here on the screen, and it is available along with the staff's email contact information

13:38:54 on the competition funding page.

13:39:00 The URL for that page is on the bottom of the slide and it is in the chat.

13:39:15 The notice for this office hour session encourages you as I said a few moments ago to either attend that March 10 a best practice and budget development webinar or to look at the budget develop men webinar recording.

13:39:26 If you did either of those, this legend looks a little familiar to you. During the webinar we talked about your approved budget, and I should be realistic.

13:39:39 It should reflect expected program revenues and expenses and its capacity to carry out program activities. It should also be consistent and aligned with the program's goals and objectives

13:39:52 and it should be flexible. We know that a project financial and operating circumstances often change, and the budget needs to be able to adapt to those changing circumstances.

13:40:08 We also shared that your team is strong budget design will provide a framework for effective budget management and it will ensure a realistic scope, appropriate detail, a competitive proposal, compliance

13:40:17, and effective delivery, that is that strong budget that serves as a roadmap for your program implementation.

13:40:27 In order to create a budget that is strong, accurate, and requires minimal clarification, I really encourage you to take your time

13:40:30 and engage others in both data collection and quality review.

13:40:42 Also during the March 10 webinar our team shared some tips and tools for creating a competitive budget narrative and that bears repeating here today

13:40:46 before we get to the questions.

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13:41:00 The first tip is as I started out talking about, read and follow the instructions and the notice of funding opportunity and in the application instructions, that is where you're going to find

13:41:10 information about the minimum and maximum cost levels and any required line items.

13:41:12 The strongest and most competitive budget narratives adhere to the guidelines in these documents.

13:41:24 I also encourage you to become familiar with the uniform guidance and only include those costs that are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable.

13:41:35 You will find the uniform guidance online at ECF are. Federal register.gov under title II grants and agreements.

13:41:41 The URL for that is also in the chat.

13:41:54 After you and your team estimate the financial resources that you need to reach your goals

13:42:00, again, following the guidance in the notice and application instructions. As you develop the narrative, remember to provide adequate descriptions and clear calculations.

13:42:13 Now that I have shared those reminders for creating a compliant and competitive budget, we can open the line for your questions. If you have a question

13:42:18, please enter into the Q&A panel.

13:42:29 There is a little icon there on your screen, it has two bubbles that says Q&A, if you click on not able open up the opportunity to enter your question.

13:42:35 The rest of our time here together is completely directed by those questions that you have.

13:42:48 For those of you that have looked at the budget instructions, you may have come across somethings

13:42:57 that you don't understand, or you don't know how to enter this in your budget this is your opportunity to ask questions about that or maybe you have already started putting your budget together and

13:43:01 you thought oh I am not sure if this is allowable.

13:43:06 This is the opportunity to enter those questions in here now.

13:43:22 And get a real-time answer. Additionally, if you prefer to ask a question by voice, you can raise your hand, there is a raise hand feature there on your toolbar that you can raise your hand.

13:43:34 We will unmute your line so you can ask your question verbally.

13:43:50 As you enter your questions, I do have my colleague Sada here with me and she is going to take some of those questions and help me answer them.

13:43:58 Welcome, Sada.

13:44:09 >>: We did have one just come in, is it possible to get direct support outside of the webinar for our unique collaborative approach?

13:44:19 >>: I am not hundred percent sure what you mean about that question.

13:44:28 I will tell you that the information we are going to share with you would be information that we would share with all applicants.

13:44:38 We want to make sure that no one has an unfair competitive advantage. Yes, we are available to answer questions and that is why we gave you that resource

13:44:47 for your regional contacts. You can certainly reach out to the regional point of contact in your area.

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13:45:02 We certainly wouldn't provide anything that would give you an edge over someone else. I would just say yes and, that's the answer to that question.

13:45:08 There you have the list of the individuals that can help you with your specific questions.

13:45:15 Again, their email addresses are on the funding page and the link to that is at the bottom of the screen.

13:45:20 Hopefully, that gives you the information you need for that.

13:45:31 What other questions do you all have?

13:45:37 how can we help you create your most competitive and compliant budget narrative?

13:46:59 Welcome back, we saw that you dropped off them.

13:47:21 >>: I am showing no open questions since I've come back in. I apologize, I thought everyone else froze

13:47:23 not me. Back up and running.

13:47:27 >>: The magic of technology.

13:47:49 >>: I do see a question now here; must grantees meet the exact match each year or is the match imitative for the three-year award?

13:48:02 >>: The fact requirements are in the notice and in the application instructions and it talks about the regulatory match.

13:48:25 That amount is accumulative. Jeff, can you go to slide 18. This shows you what the regulatory match is.

13:48:43 It shows the dollar by dollar and percent is. Grantees are required then to match dollar by dollar level. That is the match amount itself is cumulative

13:49:00 assuming you have a three-year grant, by the end of the three years, he would need to meet that match amount we ask you to budget for each year so that in year one view what budget 24% in year 24 24 year 324

13:49:04 but maybe in year one year only matching it at 20%.

13:49:25 In you to you get great support and you're able to match it at 30%. Eventually it evens out but by the end of the grant., The period of performance you would need to meet the minimum.

13:49:36 I did get there from here one in year three, it is entirely up to you and to your sources of match.

13:49:40 Thank you for that question.

13:49:53 Again, remember if you would prefer to ask a question verbally, you can use the raise hand

13:49:59 feature and we will on mute you, otherwise you can put your questions in the Q&A module.

13:50:19 >>: We have a question about food, I've heard that applicants may include food as an allowable budget expense if they justify it. What does AmeriCorps consider inappropriate justification?

13:50:32 >>: Great question it. It's one that we like to pay close attention to because food costs are often flogged during audits and monitoring exercises.

13:50:52 We like to make sure people are charging food cost appropriately. I mentioned earlier, it talks facility about food

13:51:03 related to the information such as a training event or it talks about it in the context of, let's say you are doing a day long training, 924 we will say.

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13:51:12 Maybe you are in a rural area where there aren't a lot of options for your learners to go and break for lunch.

13:51:28 If breaking for those participants to go off site is logistically not feasible and would be extremely time-consuming, then the cost of food to hold that during that training events would be allowable.

13:51:41 What I always tell folks, I deftly say if you are budgeting and you are including food, let's say this for a training.

13:51:53 To put in there that this is during a programmed lunch or its not feasible to sense our participants off-site.

13:52:02 Use some kind of clarification language in your budget narrative so that we are aware of situations like this, and we understand and can justify

13:52:17 the inclusion of food in your budget. We don't want you just budgeting food under the idea that this would be entertainment. That is something else where he will find food reference in the uniform guidance.

13:52:34 I can be allowable but just make sure that you are justifying it. It is a program timed orders just not visible to go off-site if you are having a two-hour training, I think would be really hard to justify food.

13:52:52 But if it's a day long training or a five- or six-hour training that lapses over the lunch period, then it could be justifiable, but you want to be careful.

13:53:09 What other questions do you guys have?

13:53:20 >>: We do have this question; in an earlier session it was stated that applicants are required to secure all of the matching resources

13:53:31 prior to submission and can designate unsecured match as proposed, what should applicants do if they have not yet identified all potential sources

13:53:52 of unsecured match and they haven't determined where they will submit a proposal? \

13:54:07 >>: And E grants you see here that you have the text that circled here where it says enter source of matching funds

13:54:16 it pulls up a second window here where you would actually enter the amount of managed, what the source is, and did ask you

13:54:30 to classify that as cash or in-kind or federal, state, or local government, private, but what we also ask and

13:54:34 this is again and the application instructions when you all get to reading those budget instructions.

13:54:39 It will ask you to indicate if it is secured or proposed.

13:54:54 You will see in here in this example that let's say the organization is using their general funds and they know they have those funds, so they identify the as secured

13:55:12 they also know they have certain service providers are going to donate their services. That is already secured than they would note that it is secured.

13:55:21 They have these other two grants that are out there that are proposed. Maybe there is something else that they want to propose

13:55:26 but they just haven't thought about what those resources are.

13:55:43 Knowing that you have the full three years to secure your match you could say something like additional private and public funders, hundred thousand dollars proposed or something like that.

13:55:54 You would just want to use enough description that anyone looking at this budget narrative could get an idea of what you are trying to do.

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13:56:06 The other thing that you will see is indicated at the bottom of the section and highlighted with a circle

13:56:28 is that you are to apply for cash match replacement. If you think that you cannot secure these additional matching resources, then

13:56:49 in the application itself, you will enter the amount of cash match replacement that you are seeking. In this case it's

13:57:04 the certain amount, you would indicate that in the narrative itself and then in your budget and management you would put that same amount in that it is cash and a federal source this is funding the AmeriCorps will grant you

13:57:21 to apply to the grantee of your budget. It is not going to come out, if you look at the other budget sections, it won't show up and the C and CS share of your budget, but it will come into the grantee share.

13:57:38 We will grant you if approved, we would grant you post funds to cover your portion of the budget.

13:57:57 I think the bottom line related to all of this; we want to make sure that you all are presenting a reasonable plan for how

13:58:08 you're securing your match. Whether it is something you already have secured or something you are proposing or whether it is cash match replacement that you are seeking from us.

13:58:18 We just want to make sure that you have a plan for

13:58:21 here is my matching resources and then we look at the actual application narrative here are the activities that are related to these resources as well.

13:58:32 That is truly what is going to make this the most competitive application is making sure that this budget clearly supports all of the activities here we have identified

13:58:39 in your narratives. And all of those activities are reflected back in your budget narrative.

13:58:48 What other questions do you all have?

13:59:03 >>: We do have one question here, what should an organization do if their federally negotiated indirect cost rate expired

13:59:07 and they haven't yet received approval for a new rate?

13:59:23 >>: Great question, let's talk a little bit about the administration cost and general.

13:59:29 The slide talks a little bit about section 3 at the budget narrative.

13:59:43 That is the section where you would budget any administrative

13:59:52 indirect costs there are three ways you can do this there is Corporation fixed percentage sometimes reference as the 510% fixed administrative cost option

14:00:00 then there is a federally approved indirect cost rate and a 10% diminished rate.

14:00:12 I'm going to talk about the two easy ones first and that is the corporate fixed percentage without any documentation you are eligible to claim 5% of all direct

14:00:26 cost and the CNC as share or AmeriCorps share of your budget. You can claim 5% of that as

14:00:35 administration costs you need no documentation for that you can just alrighty claim that 5%. Similarly, you can claim up to 10% of the total direct costs

14:01:00 that would be both, our grantees-- you can claim up to 10% of that and your grantee share as indirect cost. That is the Corporation fixed percentage.

14:01:12 He also had the 10% diminished rate where you can also claim 10% of modified total direct cost.

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14:01:22 That would be it does include your equipment doesn't include over a certain percentage of sub grants.

14:01:33 There is very specific guidance for how you identify and modify total direct cost you can claim up to 10% of that again no documentation required.

14:01:48 The third option, here and B, federally approved indirect cost rate

14:01:53 that is approved by the federal agency which gives you the most funding, you would apply to them as important indirect cost rate and once you have that

14:01:56 and you can use that rate for any federal grant that you have.

14:02:07 He would have to have the approved rate from the federal government.

14:02:22 We require you to give us the details of that grant and want to do that that constitute the documentation that you need in order to claim not. What is important

14:02:26 is what you're including in your budget must match what you have entered as far as the rate details and E grants.

14:02:37 Let's say, you have a rate that is due to expire March 31, 2022.

14:02:48 Which if you enter that information today on March 24, 2022 that Rate is still valid.

14:02:58 You are waiting for the new rate to come through, you are putting your budget together based on not maybe even submit the budget early.

14:03:06 By the time we are getting a round to viewing after the application deadline that rate is expired.

14:03:17 What I would suggest is if you are in a situation similar to that that he would make a notation in the budget narrative

14:03:31 that you have a new rate that is pending, maybe you know your federal funding told you that we are not going to have the new rate out by March 31 when this expires.

14:03:44 We should have it approved by May 31. If you put the and the budget narrative as we are reviewing it, we are aware of it and we can keep an eye on it.

14:04:00 If that rate is not approved at the time of the award, we would request that you advise your budget to use option a here the Corporation fixed percentage or

14:04:16 in a rare circumstance we might actually approve the award and give you a special condition that says by 60 days after the award date you must submit your new

14:04:29 indirect cost rate information and eager grants and then if you're unable to because it is not approved then we would have you go back and revise your budget.

14:04:38 If it's significantly different, then once that rate is approved

14:04:45 then you could go ahead and amend your budget to reflect the new rate.

14:04:56 The bottom line is this is true for pretty much every budget category. The more information you can give us the better you will be.

14:05:07 I said earlier, one of the goals is that we want to have a budget that provides or that requires

14:05:13 as minimal clarification as possible. The more information that you are giving us in your budget narrative

14:05:17 the less we are going to come back to you and ask you to clarify something.

14:05:47 I note that egrants system has clarification limits. I'm a huge fan of using those. Let's say you are trying to give us some detail about, let's go back to the food question.

14:06:04 You have trainings, and you are trying to explain how you are justifying the inclusion of food in there and you ran out of space in a grant, you could add a line and there put zero dollar for the scene as share

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14:06:13 zero dollars for total sure and just use that space in the clarification box to give us more information.

14:06:28 Anytime you have, that you come to a roadblock and need to give us more information but there is an e-Grants always think about the opportunity to have a zero dollars line item.

14:06:55 >>: We did have a question, and on the Q&A, can you provide more information around how to contact the federal government to request or obtain a Federal approved rate

14:07:16 >>: it may come from AmeriCorps or any other agency, you would contact them and the process for the theories by agency.

14:07:33 We have the resources for that, I believe it is in the notice, if not it is deadfly on our website. If you have another agency that is, then you would just contact them and

14:07:41 they will work with you and help you understand what you need to submit and how to submit a and how to update it each year or three years

14:07:43 or however long it is approved.

14:07:57 Thank you for that question.

14:08:05 I know people are often puzzled; this seems like a great idea but how do I even go about getting one.

14:08:08 It is great to be able to give you that information.

14:09:00 Do we have any coming through?

14:09:06 >>: I am not seeing any yet.

14:09:16 >>: We will give it a few more minutes. If you have any more questions, we will answer them and if you, don't we will give a little bit of your time back.

14:10:29 I am entering request an indirect cost rate agreement if AmeriCorps is your agency to this email address

14:10:38 and that would also be how you would get additional information about applying for and negotiated cost rate and again this is also in the cost notice.

14:11:37 While I am not seeing any additional questions.

14:11:42 Jeff can you take us to slide number 10.

14:11:48 If you have a question, we will deftly still answer it.

14:12:00 It looks like maybe you don't have any additional questions; I do want to alert you all to several additional technical assistance webinars that are coming up over the next few weeks.

14:12:12 Registration is required for each of the sessions and the link to register as well as details about the webinars are available on the competition funding page.

14:12:23 If you are unable to join any of these live webinars, please note that just like the session, we will post the recording on the funding page.

14:12:29 Usually those are posted within 10 business days after the event.

14:12:41 Also, do remember you can submit your

14:12:44 questions to AmeriCorps grants@cns.gov or you can email your original contact for your state or territory and again their email addresses are listed on the funding page.

14:12:54 Let's take one last check to see if we have any other questions coming through.

14:12:57 >>: Not currently.

14:13:14 >>: Then I will go ahead and thank you all for joining. I appreciate you spending your time with us, I hope you found it was helpful. And got the resources you needed to submit

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14:13:26 a compliant and competitive budget. I also appreciate you responding to this final pole to let us know how helpful the session was for you.

14:13:38 If there are no other questions and I will give you back about 15 minutes of your day and thank you for your time and interest in AmeriCorps and I wish you all of the best in this competition.

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