

Mini-Grant 2006 Evaluation Criteria Outline

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

1-3 Copy full text of Evaluation Criteria.
4-6 Indicate changes by strike-through and underline, and reduce font of definitions.
7-8 Make edits shown in previous section, and edit sentences accordingly.
9-10 Show requirements in bullet form and move reduced font text to footnotes.
11-12 Change requirements into opening sentences of application narrative.
13 Additional Notes on the Evaluation Criteria.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion; however, applicants need not develop their applications precisely according to the order presented. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 30 points

a) Service Area (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant identifies the specific service area for project implementation and the target population they serve.

(b) Needs of Service Area (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant describes the specific needs of the targeted service area; documents that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community and/or engages organizations that serve low-income populations; and documents how an increase in an organization's capacity will allow them to address a vital need in their distressed community. A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate. The applicant documents that both the unemployment level and poverty level for the targeted neighborhood or community are equal to or greater than the State or national level. The applicant cites the most recent available statistics from published sources, e.g., the recent U.S. Census or updates, the State, county, city, election district and other information are provided in support of its contention.

(c) Applicant's Capacity Building Needs (10 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant documents the capacity building needs of their organization to better address the identified service area. The needs of the organization must be described in relationship to at least one of the five critical areas of organizational capacity: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement.

(d) Project Objectives (10 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant states all primary project objectives. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant clearly states the objectives of the proposed project and shows that the project will address the needs of the organization in at least one of the five critical areas: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant presents a compelling need for strengthening their organizational capacity in the community.

APPROACH - 30 points

Capacity Building Strategy. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant describes a plan for developing organizational capacity in at least one of five critical areas: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement. Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the capacity building approach or strategy is logical, reasonable, and clearly linked to the desired results and benefits expected.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES - 15 points

(a) Past Experience (10 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates experience in and a proven track record of addressing the needs of distressed community(ies) through the provision of social services. A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant documents a history of service in the proposed project service area. In addition, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant includes concrete examples of services and/or programs.

(b) Organizational Capacity and Project Staff (5 Points). An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant: describes how the proposed project fits into the structure of the applicant organization; provides evidence of facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources that are adequate to achieve project goals; includes a listing of key positions required to carry out the project, the individuals proposed to fill the positions, and a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform; provides evidence demonstrating the staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities; and includes the above information with regard to consultants or staff from other organizations proposed to work on the project.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 15 points

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant: identifies the results or benefits expected to be derived from project activities; describes how the proposed project will affect the sustainability of their organization; describes the process for determining the relationship between project activities and anticipated outcomes, including any output measures to be used to evaluate the proposed project; and clearly describes the relationship(s) among project objectives, activities and anticipated results. The results and benefits proposed by the applicant must be reasonable and likely, quantified, and clearly linked to and supported by the proposed capacity building approach.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

An application will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant includes a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and that provides a detailed justification for the amount requested. Applicants should refer to the budget information presented in the Standard Forms 424 and 424A and to the budget justification instructions in *Section C*, General Instructions for the Uniform Project Description.

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

The extent to which the application demonstrates that the applicant has an annual operational budget of less than \$500,000, or a Tribal membership of less than 5,000 via a signed assurance from an authorized official (please see *Sections IV.2 and VIII* for instructions on completing the assurance).

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

An application will be evaluated on the extent to which an applicant is located within areas of the Gulf Coast region directly affected by hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita. "Affected" is defined as being in the locale that has been directly influenced or altered by hurricane Katrina and/or Rita and as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as affected areas for Counties. Please visit the FEMA website at:

<http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/index.shtm>, to find out if your project site is listed as an affected County.

Indicate changes by strike-through and underline, and reduce font of definitions.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

~~The following evaluation criteria appear in weighted descending order. The corresponding score values indicate the relative importance that ACF places on each evaluation criterion; however, applicants need not develop their applications precisely according to the order presented. Application components may be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project to more detailed information about how it will be conducted).~~

~~In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:~~

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 30 points

~~a) **Service Area (5 Points).** An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant identifies the specific service area for project implementation and [Identify] the target population they serve.~~

~~(b) **Needs of Service Area (5 Points).** An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant describes the specific needs of the targeted service area; documents that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community and/or engages organizations that serve low-income populations; and documents how an increase in ~~an~~ [your] organization's capacity will allow ~~them~~ [it] to address a vital need in ~~their~~ [your] distressed community. A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate. ~~The applicant~~ documents that both the unemployment level and poverty level for the targeted neighborhood or community are equal to or greater than the State or national level. ~~The applicant~~ cites the most recent available statistics from published sources, e.g., the recent U.S. Census or updates, the State, county, city, election district and other information are provided in support of its contention.~~

~~(c) **Applicant's Capacity Building Needs (10 Points).** An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant documents the capacity building needs of ~~their~~ [your] organization to better address the identified service area. ~~The needs of the organization must be~~ described in ~~relationship~~ to at least one of the five critical areas of organizational capacity: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement.~~

~~(d) **Project Objectives (10 Points).** An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant states all primary project objectives. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant clearly states the objectives of the proposed project and shows that the project will address the needs of the organization in at least one of the five critical areas: ~~1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement.~~ Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant presents a compelling need for strengthening their organizational capacity in the community.~~

APPROACH - 30 points

Capacity Building Strategy. ~~An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant~~ describes a plan for developing organizational capacity in at least one of five critical areas: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement. ~~Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which~~ [show that] the capacity building approach or strategy is logical, reasonable, and clearly linked to the desired results and benefits expected.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES - 15 points

(a) Past Experience (10 Points). ~~An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant~~ demonstrates experience in and a proven track record of addressing the needs of distressed community(ies) through the provision of social services. ~~A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate. Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant~~ documents a history of service in the proposed project service area. ~~In addition, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant~~ includes concrete examples of services and/or programs.

(b) Organizational Capacity and Project Staff (5 Points). ~~An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant:~~ describes how the proposed project fits into the structure of the applicant organization; provides evidence of facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources that are adequate to achieve project goals; includes a listing of key positions required to carry out the project, the individuals proposed to fill the positions, and a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform; provides evidence demonstrating the staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities; and includes the above information with regard to consultants or staff from other organizations [if any] proposed to work on the project.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 15 points

~~An application will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant:~~ identifies the results or benefits expected to be derived from project activities; describes how the proposed project will affect the sustainability of their organization; describes the process for determining the relationship between project activities and anticipated outcomes, including any output measures to be used to evaluate the proposed project; and clearly describes the relationship(s) among project objectives, activities and anticipated results. ~~[Show that] The results and benefits [are] proposed by the applicant must be~~ reasonable and likely, quantified, and clearly linked to and supported by the proposed capacity building approach.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

~~An application will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant~~ includes a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and that provides a detailed justification for the amount requested. Applicants should refer to the budget information presented in the Standard Forms 424 and 424A and to the budget justification instructions in *Section C*, General Instructions for the Uniform Project Description.

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

~~The extent to which the application demonstrates~~ that the applicant has an annual operational budget of less than \$500,000, or a Tribal membership of less than 5,000 via a signed assurance from an authorized official (please see *Sections IV.2 and VIII* for instructions on completing the assurance).

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

~~An application will be evaluated on the extent to which an applicant is~~ [Show that you are] located within areas of the Gulf Coast region directly affected by hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita. "Affected" is defined as being in the locale that has been directly influenced or altered by hurricane Katrina and/or Rita and as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as affected areas for Counties. Please visit the FEMA website at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/index.shtm>, to find out if your project site is listed as an affected County.

Make edits shown in previous section, and edit sentences accordingly.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 30 points

a) Service Area (5 Points). Identify the specific service area for project implementation, and [Identify] the target population they serve.

(b) Needs of Service Area (5 Points). Describe the specific needs of the targeted service area; Document that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community and/or engages organizations that serve low-income populations; and Document how an increase in your organization's capacity will allow it to address a vital need in your distressed community. A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate. Document that ~~both~~ [either] the unemployment level and poverty level for the targeted neighborhood or community are equal to or greater than the State or national level. Cite the most recent available statistics from published sources, e.g., the recent U.S. Census or updates, the State, county, city, election district and other information are provided in support of its contention.

(c) Applicant's Capacity Building Needs (10 Points). Document the capacity building needs of [your] organization to better address the identified service area. Describing [them] in relation to at least one of the five critical areas of organizational capacity: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement.

(d) Project Objectives (10 Points). State all primary project objectives. State clearly the objectives of the proposed project and Show that the project will address the needs of the organization in at least one of the five critical areas. Present a compelling need for strengthening their organizational capacity in the community.

APPROACH - 30 points

Capacity Building Strategy. Describe a plan for developing organizational capacity in at least one of five critical areas. [Show that] the capacity building approach or strategy is logical, reasonable, and clearly linked to the desired results and benefits expected.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES - 15 points

(a) Past Experience (10 Points). Demonstrate experience in and a proven track record of addressing the needs of distressed community(ies) through the provision of social services. Document a history of service in the proposed project service area. Include concrete examples of services and/or programs.

(b) Organizational Capacity and Project Staff (5 Points). Describe how the proposed project fits into the structure of the applicant organization; Provide evidence of facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources that are adequate to achieve project goals; Include a listing of key positions required to carry out the project, the individuals proposed to fill the positions, and a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform; Provide evidence demonstrating the staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities; and Include the above

information with regard to consultants or staff from other organizations [if any] proposed to work on the project.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 15 points

Identify the results or benefits expected to be derived from project activities; Describe how the proposed project will affect the sustainability of their organization; Describe the process for determining the relationship between project activities and anticipated outcomes, including any output measures to be used to evaluate the proposed project; and Describe clearly the relationship(s) among project objectives, activities and anticipated results. [Show that] The results and benefits [are] reasonable and likely, quantified, and clearly linked to and supported by the proposed capacity building approach.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points

Include a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and that provides a detailed justification for the amount requested. Applicants should refer to the budget information presented in the Standard Forms 424 and 424A and to the budget justification instructions in *Section C*, General Instructions for the Uniform Project Description.

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

Demonstrate that the applicant has an annual operational budget of less than \$500,000, or a Tribal membership of less than 5,000 via a signed assurance from an authorized official (please see *Sections IV.2 and VIII* for instructions on completing the assurance).

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points

[Show that you are] located within areas of the Gulf Coast region directly affected by hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita. "Affected" is defined as being in the locale that has been directly influenced or altered by hurricane Katrina and/or Rita and as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as affected areas for Counties. Please visit the FEMA website at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/index.shtm>, to find out if your project site is listed as an affected County.

Show requirements in bullet form and move reduced font text to footnotes.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE - 30 points

a) Service Area (5 Points).

- Identify the specific service area for project implementation, and
- [Identify] the target population they serve.

(b) Needs of Service Area (5 Points).

- Describe the specific needs of the targeted service area.
- Document that the proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community and/or engages organizations that serve low-income populations.
- Document how an increase in your organization's capacity will allow it to address a vital need in your distressed community.¹
- Document that ~~both~~ [either] the unemployment level and poverty level for the targeted neighborhood or community are equal to or greater than the State or national level.
- Cite the most recent available statistics from published sources, e.g., the recent U.S. Census or updates, the State, county, city, election district and other information are provided in support of its contention.

(c) Applicant's Capacity Building Needs (10 Points). Document the capacity building needs of your organization to better address the identified service area, describing [them] in relation to at least one of the five critical areas of organizational capacity: 1) leadership development, 2) organizational development, 3) program development, 4) revenue development strategies, and 5) community engagement.

(d) Project Objectives (10 Points).

- State all primary project objectives.
- State clearly the objectives of the proposed project and
- Show that the project will address the needs of the organization in at least one of the five critical areas.
- Present a compelling need for strengthening their organizational capacity in the community.

APPROACH - 30 points. Capacity Building Strategy.

- Describe a plan for developing organizational capacity in at least one of five critical areas.
- [Show that] the capacity building approach or strategy is logical, reasonable, and clearly linked to the desired results and benefits expected.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES - 15 points

¹ A distressed community is defined as a neighborhood or geographic community with an unemployment rate and/or poverty rate equal to or greater than the State or national rate.

(a) Past Experience (10 Points).

- Demonstrate experience in and a proven track record of addressing the needs of distressed community(ies) through the provision of social services.
- Document a history of service in the proposed project service area.
- Include concrete examples of services and/or programs.

(b) Organizational Capacity and Project Staff (5 Points).

- Describe how the proposed project fits into the structure of the applicant organization;
- Provide evidence of facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources that are adequate to achieve project goals;
- Include a listing of key positions required to carry out the project, the individuals proposed to fill the positions, and a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform;
- Provide evidence demonstrating the staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities; and
- Include the above information with regard to consultants or staff from other organizations [if any] proposed to work on the project.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED - 15 points

- Identify the results or benefits expected to be derived from project activities;
- Describe how the proposed project will affect the sustainability of their organization;
- Describe the process for determining the relationship between project activities and anticipated outcomes, including any output measures to be used to evaluate the proposed project; and
- Describe clearly the relationship(s) among project objectives, activities and anticipated results.
- [Show that] The results and benefits [are] reasonable and likely, quantified, and clearly linked to and supported by the proposed capacity building approach.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - 10 points. Include a budget that is clear, easy to understand, and that provides a detailed justification for the amount requested.²

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points. Demonstrate that the applicant has an annual operational budget of less than \$500,000, or a Tribal membership of less than 5,000 via a signed assurance from an authorized official.³

Additional Bonus Points - 5 points. [Show that you are] located within areas of the Gulf Coast region directly affected by hurricanes Katrina and/or Rita.⁴

² Applicants should refer to the budget information presented in the Standard Forms 424 and 424A and to the budget justification instructions in *Section C*, General Instructions for the Uniform Project Description.

³ Please see *Sections IV.2 and VIII* for instructions on completing the assurance.

⁴ "Affected" is defined as being in the locale that has been directly influenced or altered by hurricane Katrina and/or Rita and as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as affected areas for Counties. Please visit the FEMA website at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/index.shtm>, to find out if your project site is listed as an affected County.

Delete point values and footnotes. Change requirements into opening sentences, adding emphasis to identify specific requirements. **Note that some of the bullets shown above on pp. 9-10 within a given section or subsection simply duplicate each other. For example, the second and fourth bullets under (b) Needs of Service Area as shown on p. 9 are essentially redundant, and so they have been combined in the second bullet under (b) on this page 11.**

APPLICATION FOR ALPHA OMEGA CHARITY

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

a) Service Area.

- Alpha Omega's service area for project implementation will be the following zip codes.
- Alpha Omega's target population is . . .

(b) Needs of Service Area.

- The needs of our targeted service area are as follows: . . .
- Alpha Omega's proposed project will be implemented in a distressed community [or engages organizations that serve low-income populations] as documented by the following . . .
- Increasing Alpha Omega's organizational capacity will allow us to address a vital need in our distressed community, as documented by the following . . .
- The unemployment level and poverty level for our targeted neighborhood are equal to or greater than the State level, as demonstrated by the following current statistics from the U.S. Census updates.

(c) Applicant's Capacity Building Needs. Alpha Omega's capacity building needs to better address our service area come under two of the five critical areas: 1) leadership development, and 2) organizational development. Specifically regarding leadership development: . . . And regarding organizational development: . . .

(d) Project Objectives.

- Alpha Omega's primary project objectives are . . .
- This project will address the needs of the organization in two critical areas: leadership development and organizational development, as follows . . .
- Alpha Omega's need for strengthening our organizational capacity in the community is as follows . . .

APPROACH. Capacity Building Strategy.

- Alpha Omega's plan for developing our organizational capacity in two critical areas is as follows.
- This approach is logical, reasonable, and clearly linked to the expected results and benefits because . . .

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

(a) Past Experience.

- Alpha Omega's track record of addressing the needs of distressed communities through the provision of social services is proven by the following.
- Our history of service in our proposed project area may be documented as follows.
- Concrete examples of our services and programs include the following.

(b) Organizational Capacity and Project Staff.

- Alpha Omega's proposed project fits into our organizational structure as follows.
- Our facilities, fiscal controls, and other resources are adequate to achieve our project goals, as demonstrated by the following.
- The key positions required to carry out our project, the individuals proposed to fill those positions, and a detailed description of the kind of work they will perform are as follows.
- Alpha Omega's staff's skill, knowledge, and experience in carrying out their assigned activities is demonstrated by the following evidence.
- We will not use consultants or staff from other organizations in this project.

RESULTS OR BENEFITS EXPECTED

- The results and benefits that will come from our project activities will be . . .
- The proposed project will affect the sustainability of Alpha Omega Charity in the following manner.
- The relationship between our project activities and anticipated outcomes, including output measures to evaluate our project, will be . . .
- The relationships among Alpha Omega's project objectives, activities and anticipated results will be . . .
- These results and benefits are reasonable and likely, quantified, and clearly linked to and supported by our proposed approach because . . .

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION. See SF-424A Budget and Budget Justification.

Additional Bonus Points. Alpha Omega's annual operational budget is less than \$500,000 as certified by a signed assurance from our President.

Additional Notes and Comments on the Evaluation Criteria

1. The term "and/or" is used twice in Needs of the Service Area, under Objectives and Need for Assistance. In each case, "and/or" means "or." In the next-to-last sentence of Needs of Service Area, the word "both" means "either."
2. The Budget and Budget Justification refers applicants to "*Section C*, General Instructions for the Uniform Project Description." This is language left over from a previous RFP that should have been updated to read: "*Section V.1* Criteria, Part II, General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description, Budget and Budget Justification."
3. Regarding the Results or Benefits Expected section: you are supposed to discuss project objectives, activities, outcomes, and results. The "project objectives" are those that you listed in the Objectives and Need for Assistance section. The words "outcomes" and "results" mean the same thing. Your "activities" are the steps you plan to take in order to achieve your objectives, and those activities should be spelled out and aligned with your objectives in your Approach section.
4. The generic criteria given in the RFP in *Section V.1* Criteria include all five of the sections given in the Evaluation Criteria, but also contain an Evaluation section. However the contents of this section have been included in the Results or Benefits Expected section of the Evaluation Criteria. In other words, you do not need a separate Evaluation section because you will cover its requirements under Results or Benefits Expected.
5. The RFP twice mentions the SF-424C form, which is used for projects that involve purchase or construction of buildings. Ignore this entirely, because the RFP states in *Section IV.5* Funding Restrictions that "construction and purchase of real property [i.e., buildings and land] are not allowable activities."