

RALIANCE GRANT PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions (Request for Proposal)

1. *What is SMART Goal Format?*

SMART is an acronym to help people remember the key components of writing good goals and objectives in a way that can be quantified or measured for evaluation and planning purposes.

- *Specific* – target a specific area for improvement.
- *Measurable* – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.
- *Achievable* – Can the measurable objective be achieved, given the available expertise?
- *Realistic* – What results can realistically be expected, given available resources?
- *Time-Bound* – specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

2. *What are your requirements for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?*

It can be fairly simple and short. We want to know about any partners or consultants who will be assisting with this project. What is their name? What is their relevant experience (briefly)? What role will they play for this project? Have you worked with them before and, if so, in what capacity? All parties need to sign the MOU to demonstrate their knowledge of and commitment to the project. If more than one external partner is involved, they can all be included in one MOU, or there can be a separate one for each, as long as each partner signs off as to their involvement and role in the project.

3. *Are letters of support required for this proposal?*

No, only signed MOU's with any partner or consultant listed as a key player or included in the budget are required. Only requested information will be forwarded to reviewers for consideration.

4. *How do I complete our application/RFP if we are using a "fiscal sponsor"?*

When completing your application/RFP there is a section asking you if you are using a fiscal sponsor. If you are using a fiscal sponsor you will be required to enter the following information:

- Fiscal Sponsor Name
- Fiscal Sponsor Tax ID
- Mailing Address (including city, state and postal code)

You will also be required to attach a current copy of the fiscal sponsor's IRS determination letter (in Section F) and a fiscal sponsor agreement form (in Section G). You can find a link to the form on the application. Please note that the "fiscal sponsor" is an eligible 501(c)(3) non-profit that is willing to manage the contract, finances and reporting for the project.

5. *Is there another name for the Request for Proposal (RFP)?*

Yes, when you log into the grant management software you may see the RFP referenced as 'application'.

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6. *What is the deadline for submission of the Request for Proposal?*

This information is due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, Thursday, November 2, 2017.

7. *What is the funding period for this grant cycle?*

April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019

8. *When will the notice of awards be announced?*

By February 22, 2018

9. *How many grants will be funded?*

Total funding available for this funding cycle is \$600,000, to fund up to 20 projects.

10. *Will there be an equal number of grants awarded in each of the three categories?*

Not necessarily. It will depend on the reviewers' scores, number of applications received in each category and the relevance of the proposal to the funding priorities.

11. *If we are awarded for this round – will there be rounds of funding in the future?*

We are not planning on awarding continuation grants. We are looking for projects that can be completed in one year.

12. *Can our project fund a portion of a project (for example, if \$50,000 would only be part of the overall project budget)?*

Yes, you would explain that in the proposal and would clearly outline the activities, deliverables, and costs that are relevant to this particular grant and briefly explain how it fits with the larger project.

13. *Will reviewers be looking for projects that involve collaborative partnerships?*

We do not require collaborations and that is not part of the score. We ask that you demonstrate that you have the necessary expertise and capacity to complete the project. If it does involve collaborations, we ask that the roles be described in your attached MOU.

14. *Will you accept a Letter of Recommendation for a project submission?*

No. Letters of Recommendation or support are not required or accepted for this grant process. If this individual or agency would like to take a role in the project, an MOU would be required.

15. *How will the grants be reviewed?*

We have reviewers from around the nation who have expertise in each of the areas. A minimum of 3 readers, external to the partner agencies, will review and score each application. These scores are then averaged. Managing partners make the final determinations based on scores, comments and goals.

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16. *Who are the reviewers?*

- The names of the reviewers will be kept confidential but there will be at least 3 readers per application, who have expertise in that category, and who are external to Raliance.
- Reviewers may submit a proposal in a different category, but may not review any proposals in a category for which they have submitted an application or for any project with which they are involved in any capacity.

17. *How will this phase be scored?*

Please see section A.15 Scoring of Proposals for a breakdown of the scoring.

18. *We are looking to increase the hours for a position that has been vacant for several months? Does this constitute “creation of new personnel”?*

No. Increasing the number of hours for an existing position is allowable, as is contracting with a partner agency for a specific task.

19. *Since we cannot hire, can we use the funds to pay volunteers for their time served on the project?*

Yes, and you would clarify in the Budget Narrative that you are paying stipends to volunteers, the amount you are paying, and the tasks they will carry out.

20. *Is there a maximum allowance for the indirect cost rate?*

The maximum indirect cost rate that you may charge is 10% unless you have a current federally approved indirect cost rate agreement which you will be required to attach to your application.

21. *Is there a cut-off for the indirect cost rate that will be allowed for University grant applicants?*

No, as long as you provide the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. However, if there are more high-scoring proposals than funding available, this factor could come into play in making final decisions.

22. *Should the budget include any travel dollars for technical assistance/training?*

It can – that is an allowable expense. However, Raliance is not sponsoring any such trainings for these grants.

23. *Can funding be used for publicity?*

Yes, if that is a task that is essential to the project’s success and it is clearly explained in the proposal and budget narrative.

For additional questions, please contact Deb Johnson at grants@nsvrc.org.

This document will continue to be updated until the process closes.