Section 4.2: Developing and Issuing Solicitations, Requests for Proposal (RFPs), Program Guidance, and Application Packets

PURPOSE AND POLICY

The process of developing and issuing solicitations must adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 41-2702 governs solicitation and award of grant applications in Arizona. Uniform Guidance (200.203) has specific requirements for pass-through funding from federal agencies. In addition, funding agencies may have requirements specific to the program. The solicitation should align with the goals of the program plan and define clear expectations for meeting the program plan goals.

The solicitation and review process requires the collaboration of multiple people and, when necessary, multiple offices. The following is a list of roles and responsibilities that should be adopted in order to complete the application development process:

Roles

- Name a point of contact for all correspondence/questions regarding the solicitation and a backup in instances when he or she is not in the office

- Name a single point of contact that will make approvals/revisions while consulting with necessary experts and supporting agencies, monitor timelines associated with solicitations, facilitate resolution of difficult issues and provide ownership and oversight of the solicitations process.

Responsibilities

- Track the receipt of comments by supporting agencies and ensure version control

- Monitor adherence to deadlines by program and external supporting agencies

- Conduct final QA process to ensure all steps and reviews in the process have been completed according to policy and recommend necessary adjustments for future use

- Create solicitation files, folders and task lists to develop procedures and document solicitation process. The eCivis Subrecipient Manager (SRM) is the preferred tool for this process (additional information about eCivis SRM is included below).

- Review solicitations for consistency with the mission of the grant program and/or current administration

- Read program background to understand program purpose and objectives, and ensures established performance measures link to program objectives

- Serve as final arbiter when issues or conflicts arise

- Manage and oversee template maintenance and revisions

- Conduct final comprehensive review of the application before it is released to potential applicants

- Develop and control final review process of all incoming solicitations

- Check the statutory required aspects associated with the grant; eligibility requirements, match requirements (if applicable), program elements/components, selection criteria, and authorizing statute and requirements
- Conduct review of the solicitation for overall consistency, legal issues and major errors and omissions.

A.R.S. 41-2702 requires the solicitation to include, at a minimum, the following information:

- A description of the nature of the grant project, including the scope of the work to be performed by the recipient/subrecipient.
- An identification of the funding source (federal funds should include originating federal funding agency, Federal Application Identification Number (FAIN) or other unique federal grant award number, and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number)
- Total amount of available funds.
- Whether a single award or multiple awards may be made.
- Encouragement of collaboration by entities for community partnerships, if appropriate.
- Any additional information required by the applications.
- The criteria or factors under which applications will be evaluated for award and the relative importance of each criteria or factor.
- The due date for submittal of applications and the anticipated time the awards may be made.

Once the solicitation has been reviewed and finalized, provide adequate public notice (Arizona state statute requires at least six weeks for public grants). Public notification should include posting to the appropriate website and distribution via any other required notification.

Developing the Solicitation in eCivis SRM

The eCivis SRM tool navigates through the entire grant solicitation process. All necessary information is captured at the original recipient level and is retained to create further efficiencies as funding moves downstream to subrecipients. Some of the benefits of using eCivis SRM include consistency across grant programs, a template for developing goals and metrics for subrecipients, task tracking and reminders and electronic document retention in a single location.

The solicitation will be published and available to the public. The solicitation will be published and available to the public. For a complete, detailed guide to creating solicitations using the eCivis SRM, please refer to the eCivis SRM Creating a Public Solicitation User Guide.