Organization Capacity Building Technical Assistance Application Release

Request for Proposals FAQs

PLEASE CHECK EACH SECTION FOR UPDATES BY DATE (UPDATED AS OF 02/06/2018)

GENERAL RFP QUESTIONS

1) Who is eligible to apply?
All nonprofit homeless service providers participating in the LA County Coordinated Entry System (CES) are eligible to apply. Providers do NOT need to operate/administer a CES contract to be eligible. Any agency participating in CES is eligible to apply, not just directly funded agencies.

2) Where can I access the application?
Applications are available for download here.

3) What is the timeline?
Applications for capacity building technical assistance will be accepted on a rolling basis, contingent on fund availability. Applications must be submitted by the first of the month for review. Review of applications will be completed within 30 days of submission. Applicants will be made aware of selection decisions within 30 days of the close of the review period.

4) What types of things will be funded under "capacity building?"
Applications for capacity building technical assistance will focus on enhancements to operational infrastructure, in the areas of operational management, leadership development, program administration, information technologies, office space, and professional services. Please see the "Areas of Focus" chart on page 4 of the RFP for additional examples.

Applicants may send application questions to rfp@unitedwayla.org.

5) What types of capacity building technical assistance are available?
To best suit the unique needs of providers, three (3) options for capacity building technical assistance are available: Organization Capacity Needs Assessment Requests, Implementation Requests and Infrastructure Requests.

For more detail, please see page 3 of the RFP.

6) What are the submission instructions?
Please submit the complete application and all supporting documentation to capacitybuilding@lahsa.org. Applications must be submitted by the first of the month to adhere to submission, review, and approval timelines.
For an application to be considered complete, all signatures must be physical. No electronic signatures will be accepted.

RESPONSES BELOW ADDED AS OF 01.29.18

1) Are housing developers eligible to apply?
Any non-profit service provider is eligible to apply, including housing developers.

2) Will there be any informational webinar about this opportunity in addition to posting an FAQ page?
An informational webinar was held on Monday, February 5, 2018 from 2:00-3:00pm. For those who were unable to attend the live webinar, a recording will be posted on the LAHSA website.

3) Is there any benefit to early submission?
Early submission will be prioritized; however, taking the time submit a thoughtful, thorough application is most important. All applications, regardless of when they are submitted, will be considered according to the Selection Prioritization listed in the RFP on page 2.

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4) Once compiled, will the list of available TA providers be shared?
LAHSA released a Request For Bid (RFB) to gather a list of vendors and the services they provide, which will be shared with the public on LAHSA's website as soon as the commission approves the list of TA providers.

5) What is the time frame for receiving a response once an application has been submitted?
The overall time frame for notification is 60 days. For example, if an application is submitted on February 20, the Evaluation Panel comprised of LAHSA and Funders Collaborative representatives would have 30 days (until March 22nd) for the initial review. From there, the Evaluation Panel would have an additional 30 days to make a final decision on selection of the application (until April 21st). The second 30-day period is intended to allow the Evaluation Panel time to help with scoping the application if needed, identify an appropriate vendor for recommendation, or vetting a vendor submitted by an applicant.

6) What is the total funding available? Is there a funding cap?
Partners should outline their full capacity need within their request and budget. To help in that process, general funding guidelines have been given in the budget template instructions. While funding for assessment and technical assistance implementation through Measure H will be capped per organization, this may be supplemented by private funders. Additionally infrastructure requests to the private funding partners do not have a set cap but should be directly related to implementation of your technical assistance work.

7) Will grantees be required to select only those vendors on a pre-approved list?
The list of approved vendors will be posted soon through LAHSA. If an applicant would like to use a vendor outside of that list, that is possible, but the applicant needs to fill out the request form in the RFP on page 17 to provide information about the TA provider so they can be considered through the process to become an approved vendor. If a provider does not have a specific vendor they would like to utilize, LAHSA can help pair vendors and agencies.

8) Is total funding available expected to decrease monthly as new projects are selected each month?
All applications will be considered equally for support no matter the round of review an agency submits under. Rolling awards will be based on demonstrated need related to capacity building and review considerations listed on page 2 of the RFP for both private and public awards. Please also see Question #3 above.

RESPONSES BELOW ADDED AS OF 01.29.18

1) What is CES?
CES, or Coordinated Entry System (CES), is a system to end homelessness that coordinates providers' efforts, creates a real-time list of individuals experiencing homelessness in our communities, and is a means to quickly and efficiently match people to available housing resources and services that best fit their needs. Coordinated Entry System is now operating on-the-ground in all areas of LA County through the support and coordination of over 400 local service providers. A team in each region now meets regularly, working together to ensure full geographic coverage by coordinating and expanding outreach, effective assistance to help clients navigate the housing system, and efficient and accurate matches to housing and non-housing resources based on the individual needs and acuity level. For more information, please visit: https://www.lahsa.org/ces

RESPONSES BELOW ADDED AS OF 02.06.18

1) What does it mean to be participating in CES?
Any Continuum of Care (CoC) agency providing housing or services to persons who are literally homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness and who have agreed to abide by LA CES Policies and Procedures to the greatest extent possible. CES Participating Agencies shall endorse the CES Guiding Principles, and agree to support the CoC systems approach to defining access points, standardized assessment process, prioritization protocols, and referral strategies. Agencies must demonstrate CES participation in their narrative responses. Providers do NOT need to operate/administer a CES contract to be eligible.

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LAHSA Policies: https://www.lahsa.org/policy/
Guiding Principles: https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=1812-ces-guiding-principles.pdf
CES Policies: https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=332-coordinated-entry-system-policies
CES Interim Guidance: https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=337-ces-interim-guidance

2) How do I join CES?
For information on how to become a CES participant, please visit: http://ceslosangeles.weebly.com/nonprofit-partner.html

3) What does the assessment in Option A consist of?
Agencies will work with a consultant and develop a focus, such as financial procedures & policies. The consultant will work with an organization's staff and leadership, inclusive of Boards, and conduct a review of practices and policies as related to the project focus, resulting in a set of recommendations for further implementation.

4) Would we need to submit the capacity building assessment with our proposal?
If your organization has already completed an assessment, then it does need to be submitted for review along with your application. If you do not have an assessment already completed, highlight what you hope to accomplish through an assessment in the narrative section.

5) For Option B, can we provide assessments conducted by third party consultants/agencies rather than a LAHSA assessment?
Agencies can submit assessments conducted by a third party. LAHSA does not conduct needs assessments so you should submit whatever assessment documentation you have as part of the application. The Evaluation Panel will review your documentation and offer help with scoping, if needed.

6) Does Option B backup documentation have to be from a consultant if we have a clear, specific need? Is there a standardized form we should use for this, or should we just provide the assessment documentation we were given by the consultant who provided us with assessment?
Option B is for agencies that have already identified a technical assistance project resulting from a recent comprehensive capacity needs assessment or other work with a consultant within the past three completed. All documentation related to your specific request should be submitted. Documentation will be reviewed and deemed whether or not it is sufficient during the review process.

7) Under what conditions would an agency need to submit a Vendor Request Form?
An organization would need to submit a Vendor Request Form if they are already working with a vendor or have someone they would specifically like to use who is not included on the list of approved vendors published by LAHSA.

8) Does the "project" need to be completed by a certain date?
Not necessarily but you should include a timeframe for how long you think the project would take in your application.

9) Are all of the available funds coming from Measure H?
Funding for this opportunity is being provided by the County of Los Angeles Homeless Initiative Strategy E7 as well as the Home For Good Funders Collaborative. Through this one RFP, your application will be reviewed by both public and private funders. It is very important that organizations submit thoughtful, thorough requests so their needs can be matched with the most appropriate funder.

10) What will private funders be looking for?
Private funders are interested in providing supplemental support for technical assistance implementation and related one-time infrastructure supports for critical systems partners. However, applicants do not need to separate out their needs in the application; all needs should be presented as a comprehensive package. Therefore, it is important to submit thoughtful, thorough requests so your needs can be matched with the most appropriate funder.

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11) **Will any ongoing expenses be considered for funding, such as staffing, or only one-time expenses?**
Ongoing operational expenses like personnel will not be funded through the Technical Assistance application. However, agencies can request hiring a staffing recruiter or another one-time personnel cost. Operational infrastructure improvements that are closer to a one-time need will be considered, such as a period of time where you need to work with a consultant or set up a new software system. Please review the examples listed in the "Areas of Focus" on page 4 of the RFP. This list is not comprehensive so if you can explain another need, please do so in the narrative section of your application.

12) **Could this opportunity be used to cover infrastructure needs an organization has recently expended and paid for through general operating dollars, not necessarily through grants?**
This funding opportunity will not reimburse organizations for any money already spent towards capacity building.

13) **Can one-time costs include a "train the trainer" on an evidence-based curriculum to enhance service delivery?**
As long as the training position identified is not ongoing, it would be considered for selection.

14) **We recently entered into a contract with a consultant and have paid a portion of the total fee to the consultant with the balance to be paid over the next couple of months. Would this RFP reimburse our organization for money already spent or pay for any of the remaining contract with the consultant?**
This funding opportunity will not be applicable to any currently active contracts with consultants. Organizations can apply for complementary technical assistance support or implementation support based on the recommendations from their work with a consultant. By demonstrating that commitment as well, it makes an application competitive for review.

15) **Can an organization apply for a capacity need that spans multiple areas of focus listed on page 4 of the RFP?**
Yes, agencies should explain their comprehensive capacity building needs and submit it as one package. Infrastructure and capacity building needs should be connected in the narrative section of the application.

16) **Can we review concepts with staff in advance of submission?**
Staff is available to help you scope your application and answers questions but cannot assist you in developing content or writing the application.

17) **How do we outline infrastructure needs within the application?**
Infrastructure needs should be integrated within the technical assistance request as part of the implementation plan. Infrastructure requests should be clearly outlined in the narrative portion of the application in addition to the budget.

18) **What is the length of time a consultant stays with the organization?**
Providers should include a timeframe for how long they think the project would take in their application. During the review and scoping process, the Evaluation Panel will reach out to the provider if further discussion surrounding timeline for project completion is needed.

19) **On the application, what is meant by organization headcount?**
Organization headcount is the total number of staff your organization employs, including full-time and part-time employees.

20) **Do we need to list information about subcontractors or vendors in Part III Implementation Team if we haven't selected them yet?**
Yes, please estimate the amount of time any partner on your project would be involved, regardless of if they have been selected yet. This gives the Evaluation Team the best understanding of the projected time commitment around how long your project will last.

21) **Do the questions bullet pointed in the "Project Budget for Request" section on page 12 (Part II) pertain to the capacity need we outline in this proposal? Or are they referring more generally to our organization's overall operational capacity?**
This section is intended for you to help us understand what other resources have been identified or allocated for capacity building. The ability to demonstrate that you are leveraging other resources to achieve the scope of your request will make your application more competitive.

22) **Under Organization Operating information, the last section states we must have one of the following: 1)LASHSA Risk Assessment 2) Risk Assessment conducted by another funding or auditing entity, and 3) other audit or compliance finding as assessed by LAHSA or another funding or auditing entity. What if we do not have any of the above?**
Any audited financial documentation will satisfy this requirement, including any IRS 990 or Audited Financial Statements.

23) **What budget form(s) are requested under Part III: additional attachments?**
The required Budget Form can be downloaded on the Home For Good website: www.homeforgoodla.org/grantseekers

24) **Do we need to send up one PDF as the package?**
You can submit your application as one whole PDF attachment or saved as individual documents all submitted in a single email.

SELECTION CRITERIA

1) **How will applications be prioritized for selection?**
Applications will be prioritized based on various criteria, outlined in "Selection Prioritization Overview" chart on page 2 of the RFP.

RESPONSES BELOW ADDED AS OF 01.29.18

1) **Is the noted prioritization of need based on high-risk status also applicable for housing developers?**
Prioritization considerations outlined in the RFP are applicable to all applicants.

RESPONSES BELOW ADDED AS OF 02.06.18

1) **When it comes to prioritization, are you taking into consideration agencies who are serving high need communities or expanding into them?**
Yes, please outline the critical role your organization plays in coordinating or delivering services in CES.

2) **What type of documentation is needed to demonstrate "high risk" status?**
An agency should submit documentation that demonstrates outstanding and/or recurring audit or compliance findings for two or more years. This documentation could come from LAHSA, another funder or a compliance or auditing agency. No particular risk assessment will carry more weight than another but the documentation should clearly demonstrate where the risk is coming from and how this will help you improve infrastructure.

3) **Will you be prioritizing applications that follow either Option A or Option B?**
Applications will not be prioritized according to the type of request. There will be equal opportunity for organizations seeking Option A or Option B.

4) **Are any bullets weighted more than others within each category priority category (High, Medium, Low)?**
No. The narrative section should be used to demonstrate how the technical assistance will your ability to complete the project/focus area outlined in your application.

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5) If an organization is not funded in one round due to prioritization rather than merit of request, will organizations be required to re-apply or will a re-submission be allowed/required?
If your application is not prioritized, we will be assisting with scoping of applications and discussing ways to amend parts of your application to make it more competitive. Because this is a non-traditional RFP, we will reach out to you and see if you are willing/able to change parts of your application to align with the focus of your work. We might also be able to offer an alternative timeline for funding your work. If we are not able to come to an agreement, you can submit an appeal. The appeal process is outlined on page 3 of the RFP.

6) If we submit several applications at once, will those applications not deemed as a priority that month be kept for possible future funding, or will we need to resubmit?
Agencies should not submit multiple applications but rather should present a single, thoughtful application that clearly presents what the organization's needs are as one package. We will work with you to scope your application if necessary.

7) If you find groups of agencies with the same need, will you group us together with a vendor having this expertise?
The model for this RFP is cohort-style learning, coaching and consultation. If an organization is open to collaborating with others, please include that in the narrative.

8) Does all criteria outlined in risk assessment need to met?
Agencies do not need to meet all of the criteria outlined in priority categories but the narrative should explain how receiving funds will help them achieve their goal.