

## APPLETREE FOA Informational Call - 12/7/2016

### Questions and Answers

#### Q&A – Evaluation specific

**Q: Is it acceptable to include in the funding request support for evaluation services from a consultant to help with design of questions, etc.?**

A: CDC's Office of the Director position, they don't care if a consultant is used. You can hire a consultant; however, look at what is in the FOA and ask if you are capable of doing this internally. ATSDR/DCHI Program preference: A consultant is an allowable cost, but the purpose of the APPLETREE program is to build state capacity. When contractor/consultants are used to support these efforts, it is not building state program capacity. This evaluation process may seem daunting but can probably be handled in house.

**Q: Slide 11: Evaluation plan. Is this something that is expected in the application or in detailed evaluation plan due later?**

A: Slide 11 is all the detail that can go into an evaluation plan. In reality we don't need information this complex in the application, but in the 6 month post-grantee evaluation plan we would expect this level of detail. Slide 12: Evaluation Plan-Core is what you would want to include in your application.

**Q: What is meant by "indicator"?**

A: "Indicator" is another name for process or outcome measures. These are given to you by the program in the FOA.

#### Q&A - General

**Q: Regarding the safe drinking water component of safe siting program: Does this include evaluating lead in water from infrastructure or is this excluded?**

A: Yes, the safe drinking water portion of the safe siting program does include lead in water regardless of source. The EPA lead and copper rules will be included in the ATSDR safe siting guidance.

**Q: With respect to the collaboration section that begins on page 5 of the FOA. Can ATSDR provide clarification on the letters of support and MOU that are expected?**

A: This is meant to be general. ATSDR wants to know if you are collaborating with any other NCEH/ATSDR, or CDC funded programs. If so, include a letter to that effect. If there are Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that exist, we are looking for a copy of the cover page. This is an opportunity for you to strengthen your application by including those partnerships.

**Q: Should the 5 letters of support be from outside organizations?**

A: Yes. Outside organizations would include state environmental agencies, USEPA, local health departments, etc.

**Q: Several states have been told it was against USEPA ethics to provide a letter of support.**

A: It's not "required" to have a letter from USEPA for scoring, or from any other entity, specifically. Letters of Appreciation or letters noting collaboration and partnership are okay. ATSDR is looking for affirmation of collaboration, partnership, and relationship with an environmental entity. The letter may be called something other than a "Letter of Support", if that term is problematic.

**Q: How should the safe siting work be included in the application?**

A: The APOW should include over-arching milestones for safe-siting. A more detailed implementation plan will be separate from the APOW. The APOW format linked in FOA is a suggested format that was not designed to include the safe siting work. So, the milestones for safe siting may look different in the APOW, and that's OK.

**Q: Is there page limit on APOW?**

A: No. There is not a page limit on the APOW attachment.

**Q: Would a text description of workplan be included in the 20 page limit for the narrative?**

A: Yes. A text description of the workplan would be helpful and would be included in the 20 page narrative limit. (Note in some places in the original FOA a 25 page limit was set for the narrative; however, the narrative page limit is 20 pages.)

**Q: One state is working closely with their department of environmental protection providing support around the lead and copper rule and voluntary program for schools. They are asked to attend number of public meetings about exposures in schools. Can this work be part of workplan for this cooperative agreement?**

A: It is OK to include this work on your workplan. However, while we are looking at ways to be more involved in the preventive side of public health, our main focus remains work at specific hazardous waste sites.

**Q: For the budget component for safe siting: Does ATSDR foresee an extra budget item for implementation of this new component?**

A: No. ATSDR recognizes this will be extra work for the state programs. Once ATSDR guidance is released, additional support will be provided to the states. The safe siting work will not likely be as resource intensive as it appears.

**Q: Is there a requirement for number of sites per full time employee (on the APOW)?**

A: No. There is no requirement for number of sites per full time employee.

**Q: Does the APOW need to include list of sites for first year or all three years?**

A: The APOW should include a list of sites for the first year only.

**Q: FOA mentions 'accepted petition sites' – does this mean ATSDR petition sites or does this include state petitions?**

A: This includes ATSDR accepted petition sites only.

**Q: At the bottom of page 7 of the FOA, it mentions success stories. Would these success stories come at the end of the first budget year or now for the applications?**

A: According to FOA the success stories would be submitted at the end of the first budget year. However, ATSDR sometimes asks for them throughout the year to meet reporting requirements.

**Q: It is unclear what the format should be for the workplan. Is there a specific format ATSDR would like for the APOW?**

A: No. We have a link to suggested format in the FOA. Since it is only a suggested format, if it doesn't work for you, then use what makes sense. ATSDR objective reviewers will be informed that different formats for the APOW are acceptable.

**Q: Is there a limit to how many attachments may be submitted on grants.gov?**

A: ATSDR is not aware of a limit to the number of attachments you can submit to grants.gov. However, consider compiling related documents into one file when possible.

### **Questions from after the call**

**Q: [Paraphrased] It was mentioned on the call today that a meeting will be held in mid-May 2017 for 3 nights/four days in Atlanta. When working up the budget for the application, should we include all staff members intended to work on this program or just the PI?**

A: We intentionally didn't specify the number of people in the FOA. It depends on how much money we have available to give you toward that. I think you should plan for everyone to come. We may have to adjust your budget later, but it will not hurt your application to budget for all staff to attend.

**Q: Part 1 - The logic model and Evaluation Plan tables: I heard that we should include tables – if so it may read better if a font smaller than 12 is allowed. Please let me know if acceptable or changing page layout (landscape) mid document is acceptable.**

**Part 2 - Regarding the Evaluation Plan – My understanding from Tom Chapel's presentation is the "core" table on page 12 of his presentation is all that needs to be put into an Evaluation Plan table. Confirm that the complete table on slide 12 is not required.**

A: Part 1 - REMINDER, YOU DON'T DO A LOGIC MODEL—YOU HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED THAT. For the measures, Grant Solutions is not always very table friendly. So not sure it HAS to be a table. If not, the same content can come in narrative form:

- Program element: Strategy/activity OR Outcome
- Measure/Indicator: Process Measure for that activity; or Outcome Measure for that Outcome
- Data Source/Method: How might they collect this measure

Part 2 - CORRECT—THE info on slide 11 is what you need to address if you do a table, or, if not, in narrative. AND THE ASSURANCES related to how you will disseminate the info and to whom, and how you will use the data and with whom to change course if things going poorly.

**Q: [Paraphrased] I have a question regarding MOUs. Do they have to be MOUs dealing strictly with our program, or can they be with the [larger parent organizations within the health department]?**

A: What we're looking for is affirmation of "relationships" with agencies/entities with whom you will work at sites, or during your normal course of carrying out the activities in the FOA. If the MOUs are with organizational levels that are too far away from you, I imagine that their value might be diminished in the eyes of the reviewers.

**Q: Re: 2.b.i. on page 6 of 40. Health consultations, public health assessments, and health educational materials are developed at 80% of the NPL site and accepted petitions within the awardees geographic boundaries. This language is different from past FOAs. Does this mean that 80% of our sites have to be certified? Or does it mean that we have to conduct activities for 8 of 10 new NPL site proposals, and/or petitioned sites?**

A: The latter. It means that you should conduct activities at 80% of new NPL site proposals and approved ATSDR petition sites.

**Q: On page 6, under the CDC Evaluation and Performance Measurement Strategy, there are two bulleted measures and performance goals listed that are of concern to me.**

- 1) A high percentage (90% or higher) of community members understand the site-related health risks and ATSDR's recommendations**
- 2) A high percentage (90% or higher) of people are able to protect themselves from site-related chemicals**

**For item 1 and 2, does this 90% refer to the entire community population or the number of members in attendance at public meetings/forums? I ask because populations vary. For example, a community can consist of 250 or 50,000 people, or more. What is this 90% referring to?**

A: The 90% refers to whatever sample size you have access to. We realize it is unrealistic to measure these outcomes for an entire community, so in most cases, this would likely refer to attendees at meetings. We are currently getting clearance for ATSDR's Community Assessment Survey (ACAS), which is a collection of OMB approved questions that can be asked of community members at hazardous waste sites where there is a public health threat. This survey will be made available to you. This was referenced in the FOA as well. It should be a useful tool for these measures.