

**NYS Department of State
Division of Community Services
Community Services Block Grant
NEW YORK STATE CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS
Request for Applications #13-CSBG-12**

RFA Updates

There are no updates to the RFA at this time.

Questions & Answers

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions submitted by potential applicants and are hereby incorporated into RFA #13-CSBG-12 issued on June 17, 2013. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Q1: For the Workforce Development programs, one of the requirements is to be a Community Based Organization. The presenter mentioned that this was a very specific group of organizations, and I'm wondering if my organization fits. We serve many smaller communities, mostly within Monroe county, and have a board of directors of whom more than half do live in our service area. I feel like the CBO being asked for in this program serves only one community, a smaller one than "Monroe County." Please let me know what your definition of a Community Based Organization entails.

Answer: The definition of Community Based Organization (CBO) is provided at NY Executive Law Section 159-e(4), which provides:

"Community based organization' shall mean any organization incorporated for the purpose of providing services or other assistance to economically or socially disadvantaged persons within its designated community. Such organization must have a board of directors of which more than half of the members reside in such designated community."

Additionally, for the purposes of this RFA, all CBO applicants are required to demonstrate that their organization currently provides federally-funded or state-funded services to low-income persons, and has existed continuously as a CBO or CAA for at least 5 years. All CBOs will have a 501(c)(3) status.

Q2: In connection with the Community Services Block Grant program funding being offered through the current CFA round, please clarify whether WIAs that are 501(c)(3) organizations, are eligible to apply for this workforce development funding, or if the 501(c)(3) organizations eligible must *also* be a Community Action Agency or a Community-Based Organization.

Answer: WIA organizations must be either a Community Action Agency or a Community-Based Organization as described in this RFA. Also, please see the answer to Question 1 above.

Q3: The RFA states that services and activities must take place “within an area identified as an Opportunity Area by a Regional Economic Development Council”.

Where can we find a list of identified communities that are Opportunity Areas within a region? The Strategic Plan for our region (Western NY) does not reference Opportunity Areas.

Answer: Each Regional Council has published a document describing their general approach to the Opportunity Area. Some, but not all, of the Regional Councils have a plan that is geographically focused. Thus, applicants should review these documents and link their proposal to the agenda outlined therein.

The applicant must go to the web site (below) and click on their region on the map. When their region has loaded, the applicant will find on the right side of the page in blue-Regional Opportunity Agenda. Click on this link for the respective region’s agenda. For example, Long Island is targeting Wyandanch as their opportunity area for 2013. The website is: <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>

Q4: I have been filling out the RFP for Education/Workforce Development; specifically the job placement and Retention project. It states that I need to fill out the m/wbe forms which seem to pertain to individuals who are using contractors/builders. I am running a program so I am a little confused. Am I filling out the correct RFP? The one I have been working on states that I will be working with SNAP participants. Again, I am not building anything, so it is a little confusing.

Answer: The Workforce Development RFA does not have a requirement that SNAP must be included in the work plan. Please refer to the Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance website for information related to this grant opportunity: <http://otda.ny.gov/contracts/2013/SNAPOPS/>

Q5: I am in the process of filling out the consolidated Funding Application and ran into a little snag. I am interested in applying for the Education/Workforce Development; specifically Job Placement and Retention. I am getting conflicting info between the overview material where it states the max award is \$100,000 with a local share match of 25%. And in the actual application (in regards to working with SNAP participants) it states we can apply for \$300,000 with an equal match. Maybe I am looking at two different things but I think I have been following the directions carefully. Also, when I tried to retrieve the paperwork for attachments that need to be filled out, I go to the website designated for it and am unable to download any of the paperwork.

Answer: The DCS RFA does not require SNAP-related activities, the Workforce Development RFA may be found at http://www.dos.ny.gov/funding/rfa-13-csbg-12/RFA_6-13.pdf and the application maybe accessed at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>.

Please refer to the Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance website for information related to this grant opportunity: <http://otda.ny.gov/contracts/2013/SNAPOPS/>

Q6: As I was reviewing the documents posted on the Department of State Website, I did not see any budget forms, either to download as attachments or included in the Application Instructions for this RFA.

This is the link to the webpage I was viewing: <http://www.dos.ny.gov/funding/rfa-13-csbg-12/index.html>
I would be most grateful if you could advise me on where I can find these forms to download.

Answer: The budget to be submitted is included as part of your Consolidated Funding Application. As you complete your application through this system, you will be directed to the budget forms that are required as part of this application.

Q7: I was researching some grant sources and saw the above-referenced opportunity. Is this likely to be released again in 2013 or 2014?

Answer: At this time, it is not uncertain whether or not this opportunity will be released again in 2013 or 2014.

Additional Questions, Updated July 19, 2013:

Q8: I work for an Extension association in NY and we are interested in applying for the CFA workforce development funding. I am not sure that we are a qualifying entity and I wanted to ask to be sure. In addition, if we are not a qualified entity to apply via the CFA process – are there other funding streams for workforce development you can direct me to within the state?

Answer: Qualifying agencies are either Community Action Agencies (CAA) or Community Based Organizations (CBO) with 501(c)(3) status. Additionally, for the purposes of this RFA, all CBO applicants are required to demonstrate that their organization currently provides federally-funded or state-funded services to low-income persons, and has existed continuously as a CBO or CAA for at least 5 years. Please refer to <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> for additional funding opportunities related to Workforce Development.

Q9: My plan is to open up a Child Care Center around my area that I already applied for and expand our service of transportation, not only to those kids attending my daycares but to all those other daycares around my area because we are providing these services and we find that our community need this services for our little children. I have created a Budget, business plan and it summed up to 100,000.00. My question is, from your knowledge and personal experience, do you think I qualify to apply for the Workforce Development Community services Block Grant?

Answer: Qualifying agencies are either Community Action Agencies (CAA) or Community Based Organizations (CBO) with 501(c)(3) status. Additionally, for the purposes of this RFA, all CBO applicants are required to demonstrate that their organization currently provides federally-funded or state-funded services to low-income persons, and has existed continuously as a CBO or CAA for at least 5 years.

Q10: In light of the Regional Economic Development Councils emphasis on job creation, we were thinking about applying with one of two programs we are currently developing in our Education Program.

- One is an internship training program in partnership with CUNY, aimed at expanding arts internships to make them accessible to a more diverse talent pool, both ethnically and economically.

- Our other program is currently in the pilot stage at MTC, it is a partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice. In this new education initiative, we are offering support to court-involved youth by making them members of a theatre company, providing them with transitional employment, work readiness training, and literacy education.

Because both programs are in the pilot stage, they will only serve between 8-20 teenagers and young adults per program in 2014. They fit many of the criteria of the Community Block Services Grant and the Opportunity Agenda, but as Manhattan Theatre Club is not considered CAA or a CBO, and as our scope for 2014 will not be large in terms of participants, I wanted to inquire about our eligibility and competitiveness.

Answer: Only agencies that fit the definition of a Community Action Agency (CAA) or Community Based Organization (CBO) will be eligible to apply for this RFA.

Q11: The South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO) currently provides all of the allowable activities listed in the Workforce Development RFA. As such, we are very interested in applying to this funding opportunity. However, we are not sure if we should apply due to the eligibility requirement that 50% of our Board of Directors *reside* in the community we serve. At least 50% of our Board *either* resides *or* works in our service area. Is our organization eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?

Answer: Community Based Organizations (CBO) applicants are required to have a board of directors of which more than half of the members reside in the designated community.

Q12: Is this a one year grant or a multi-year grant?

Answer: This is a single year grant.

Q13: Will the grant be only awarded to one recipient in New York City?

Answer: Per page 10 of the RFA, only one award will be made per region. The Department of State reserves the right to offer grants based on geographic or regional considerations to serve the best interest of the state, and in its sole discretion, determine the total number of awards to be granted pursuant to this RFA.

Q14: Please clarify what is meant by a local match.

Answer: The grantee will be expected to match at least 25% of the Federal funds received with non-federal funds, and use those funds in furtherance of the project.

Q15: With our Teens On Broadway initiative that began in 2012 we have worked with 8 of the 30 pre-professional training programs at NYC public schools in all 5 boroughs and we intend to serve all 30 on an ongoing basis. Our service provision has been the planning and presentation of an event at our Broadway theater, when students from 6 of these schools demonstrate excerpts of their best work. For the 115 teens who participated this past June 7th, performing on a Broadway stage is a major achievement that encouraged them to keep developing their potential to work in the entertainment industry. Keep in mind that many of the 85,000 people working in the Times Square Broadway theater industry alone started out training to be performers. So, the training we provide is part of the workforce development process for performers, but also a vital knowledge base for workers in many related fields of work.

With funding to cover tuition cost of just \$3,250 each student, we would propose to provide introductory professional-level training in an intensive 7-week summer program, with 35 full days of work skill development to 30 disadvantaged youth who graduated from schools in the areas that NYC REDC intends to serve.

Answer: If your agency fits the eligibility criteria as a Community Action Agency (CAA) or a Community Based Organization (CBO) and the proposed clients served fit the requirements of CSBG funds in that they have an income at or below 125% of the US Department of Health and Human Services 2013 poverty guidelines, and feels that the scope of work supports the needs outlined by your REDC, then you are encouraged to submit an application.

Additional Questions, Updated July 31, 2013:

Q16: We're in the process of preparing an application through the consolidated funding application for workforce development. We have a question regarding the narrative portion of the application. Regarding the section marked Project Description and Outcomes – there doesn't seem to be a place to put any narrative in this section. The only thing that is mentioned is the logic model, which is an uploaded file. Should this file include a narrative component in addition to the logic model?

Answer: Within the logic model, there are sections for applicants to include a written description. Please see the link below for instructions on how to complete the logic model: <http://www.dos.ny.gov/funding/rfa-13-csbg-12/index.html>

Q17: My Organization COJO Flatbush is considering applying for Education Workforce Development CSBG Grant. We read that there is a required 25% local share match. Can this match be in-kind?

Answer: In kind contributions can form the basis of a local share match under this RFA.

Q18: Does the local match for CBBG (Community Development Block Grant) have to be local dollars?

Answer: As per NYS Executive Law §159- j, each recipient of funds shall secure a local share equivalent to twenty-five percent of federal funds received under the community services block grant. Such local share may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated including but not limited to donated plant, equipment and services. Other federal funds cannot be used as a local share match for CSBG funding.

Q19: I have been told that, according to the regulations for funding applications that appeared before July 1, 2013, all awarded nonprofits are exempt from the Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise target goal compliance. Please confirm if this is correct.

Answer: No, there is no such exemption in the MWBE regulations pursuant to 5 NYCRR Parts 142-144 or in Executive Law Article 15-A.

Q20: Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire: Does the nonprofit organization need to submit another Questionnaire online at VendRep if they have a Vendor ID number and no information has changed? There is no mention in the RFP or online how often this must be submitted.

Answer: If the questionnaire is online and the information is current within six months, no update is needed.

Q21: Budget: Under what category do we put Insurance and Bonding costs? The amount requested is specifically to pay for the CSBG's program liability insurance. Therefore it is not an indirect cost, nor is it a utility cost.

Answer: Program liability insurance should be included under the rent category. All costs must be fully justified within the budget submission.

Q22: Budget: Does the Department of State want annual salary amounts in the budget comments for salary?

Answer: Yes, applicants should put in the annual salary amounts in the budget comments for salary.

Q23: What is considered sufficient documentation for certification that program participants are at/below the federal poverty levels and/or are low-income? Is asking the individual sufficient or is paper documentation required. If hardcopy documentation, what specifically is acceptable to the Dept of State?

Answer: Merely asking an individual is not sufficient, grantee must have proof of income verification documentation demonstrating that the client's household income is at or below 125% of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Poverty Guidelines is required.

Q24: If arts and entertainment are a vital sector, if training and retaining talent is important for the health and future of that vital sector, even if performing arts training does not necessarily result in guaranteed jobs as performers but it does provide a foundation for more available jobs in the entertainment sector -- then funding training for teens from poor families who are leaving their pre-professional high school theater programs is valid economic development. What do you think?

Answer: If you feel that the scope of work proposed will effectively address community needs within the Priority Area of this RFA and that your proposed clients served fit the requirements of CSBG funds in that they have an income at or below 125%, then the applicant is encouraged to submit an application.

Q25: We recently attended the regional economic development council workshop at Laguardia Community College and had some questions regarding program eligibility for the workforce development - community services block grant: we are the Queens Council on the Arts, a borough wide arts council that serves the borough of Queens. Would we be considered a community based organization?

Answer: Qualifying agencies are either Community Action Agencies (CAA) or Community Based Organizations (CBO) with 501(c)(3) status. Additionally, for the purposes of this RFA, all CBO applicants are required to demonstrate that their organization currently provides federally-funded or state-funded services to low-income persons, and has existed continuously as a CBO or CAA for at least 5 years.

According to NY Executive Law section 159-e:

“Community based organization” shall mean any organization incorporated for the purpose of providing services or other assistance to economically or socially disadvantaged persons within its designated community. Such organization must have a board of directors of which more than half of the members reside in such designated community.

Q26: We receive money from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts to provide services to Queens artists, the majority of whom are low income. However, we do not collect income information to verify this. Would this make us ineligible?

Answer: To apply, an applicant does not have to have proof of income verification. However, if awarded a contract, at the time of service delivery, grantees must collect proof of income verification documentation demonstrating that the client's household income is at or below 125% of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Poverty Guidelines is required.

Q27: We have six members on our board, all of whom have businesses, properties and work in Queens. Five of them reside outside of Queens, one resides in Queens. Would this make us ineligible?

Answer: For the purposes of this RFA, qualifying community based organizations must have a board of directors of which more than half of the members reside in the service area.

Q28: A Syracuse resident asked if the CAA Board Members have to live in Syracuse.

Answer: All qualified agencies must include a board of directors that allows for maximum feasible participation of the poor: for CAAs, the requirement is tripartite board composition, per NYS Executive Law §159-e(2). The board members representing the low-income community must be residents of the service area. For CBOs, the requirement is more than 50% of its members shall reside in its service area.

Q29: Is the Community Service Block Grant available to anybody or only to eligible entities (Community Action Programs)?

Answer: Eligible organizations are not-for-profit 501c(3) Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Community Action Agencies (CAAs).

Q30: I've already applied to the Community Development Block Grant through Schenectady County. Can I also apply to this CDBG grant, or is this the same program?

Answer: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is separate from this RFA which utilizes funding from the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). Eligible applicants are encouraged to submit applications for this RFA.

Additional Questions August 7, 2013:

Q31: I am working on my agencies submission of the NYS CFA for Department of State CSBG Workforce Development RFP. Question 2242 Requests that we include Resumes. However, under Documents where we can upload information there is no option to select Resumes. How do we attach the requested Resumes?

Answer: For question 2242, applicants can copy and paste the resumes for one or two key staff, as needed. If necessary, the download for logic model can also be a place to attach resumes.

Q32: We are trying to cut and paste our information, but question under "**Community Services Block Grant**" Question "**Project Program Summary**" does not allow us to enter information that would answer the question in whole. I do not see any limit on Characters. Is there a way to expand the space that was provided so we can answer the entire question?

Answer: There is a character limit to this question which cannot be expanded, all applicants must ensure that their response fits within these limits.