

## **CITY OF TUCSON ESG-CV HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION APPLICANT QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Applicant Questions and Responses posted weekly during the competition period. Responses may clarify or alter requirements outlined in the Request for Proposals and are posted as an amendment to the ESG-CV Homelessness Prevention Request for Proposals.

*This is the final update to the FAQ document as of July 10, 2022. Pursuant to the timeline outlined in the Request for Proposals, no further questions will be answered prior to the July 12, 2022 submission deadline.*

### **QUESTIONS RECEIVED WEEK OF JUNE 20, 2022**

**Question 1: Can the City of Tucson provide information or recommendations regarding an organization's eligibility or likelihood to receive funding through this competition?**

Response: Applicants which are unsure of their eligibility should email [jason.thorpe@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:jason.thorpe@tucsonaz.gov) to discuss questions. The City of Tucson cannot provide information about a potential applicant's likelihood of funding, however. Potential applicants are encouraged to review the full Request for Proposals and Evaluation Criteria to self-assess the appropriateness of an application. Potential applicants are advised that the evaluation criteria does include scoring based on the organization's prior performance on City funded projects. Applicants which have demonstrated spending and/or performance challenges on recent and/or similar City projects can expect to lose points in this area.

**Question 2: Are there a minimum number of households that organizations are expected to serve with the funding and/or a maximum dollar amount that may be expended on a single household?**

Response: The City has not established minimum or maximum number of households to be served with the project funding. Applicants are required to identify the minimum number of households that will be served by the proposed project in the project narrative and the project budget should provide justification that demonstrates the appropriateness of proposed costs based on the organization's understanding of current community conditions and assistance needs of the target population. The City has not established a maximum cost per household. Considering the variety of supportive services allowable through this funding opportunity, the City recognizes that cost per households may vary significantly based on the financial and supportive service needs of individual households. Project budgets should be designed to effectively prevent a household from experiencing homelessness and successfully promote the household's long-term housing stability after assistance ends.

**Question 3: The Request for Proposals allows a variety of supportive services. Will the City prioritize project applications which limit costs by not providing more costly optional supportive services (e.g. child care, etc.)?**

Response: As stated in the City of Tucson People, Community and Homes Investment Plan (P-CHIP), the City will prioritize homelessness prevention funding to organizations that offer the full scope of needed services beyond traditional case management to include housing counseling, legal services, credit repair/counseling, landlord mediation, and sufficient financial assistance to

support stabilization credit repair/counseling, landlord mediation, and sufficient financial assistance to support stabilization. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a breadth of supportive services sufficient to meet the housing stabilization needs of proposed households. Additionally eligible costs not defined in P-CHIP such as child care are encouraged to the extent that such costs will enable households to regain and maintain housing stability beyond project participation.

As stated in the Request for Proposals, the City will prioritize applicants which leverage outside resources in addition to ESG-CV project funds awarded through this competition to benefit participant households and strongly encourages service-rich interventions which pair ESG-CV and other funds to benefit participant households.

### **QUESTIONS RECEIVED WEEK OF JUNE 27, 2022**

**Question 4: Does an applicant need to be an HMIS participating agency at the time of application? Can an organization become an HMIS participating agency at the time of award?**

Response: Applicants do not need to be HMIS participating agencies at the time of application. Applicants selected for funding will be required to become an HMIS participating agency prior to grant agreement and will need to ensure that all project staff complete required HMIS training prior to project start to ensure that the project will be operational by the performance period start date listed in the Request for Proposals. Applicants which are not currently HMIS participating agencies are strongly encouraged to contact the TPCH HMIS Lead by emailing [hmishelp@pima.gov](mailto:hmishelp@pima.gov) to learn more about the requirements for HMIS participation.

Projects selected for funding may not begin any services until HMIS participation is established and project staff have completed required training.

**Question 5: The RFP requires that agencies ensure that at least 90% of participating households be reported as having a known exit destination in the HMIS. What does a “known exit destination” mean?**

Response: Household entries, exits, and other data are reported within the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Household exit records require projects to report the destination to which a household exits the program (e.g. self-sufficient permanent housing, a subsidized housing unit, unsheltered homelessness, etc.) Some households may exit to “unknown” destinations; this generally occurs if a project loses contact with a participant and knows that they are no longer residing in the unit that was assisted through the project.

Projects are required to have practices in place to prevent “unknown” destination exits and the City will consider any project which reports greater than 10% of exits to “unknown” destinations as unsatisfactorily performing.

**Question 6: The RFP requires that agencies maintain 90% or better HMIS Data Quality. What does “data quality” mean?**

Response: ESG-CV funded projects are required to comply with HMIS policies and procedures (posted at <https://tpch.net/about/tpch-governing-documents/>) which include timely and complete reporting of project participant identifying data (e.g. social security number, age, name, date of birth, race, etc.), participation dates (entry/exit), and other required elements. The HMIS

includes a reporting feature which will indicate data quality as a percentage and score. This percentage and score is inclusive of timeliness of data entry (i.e. all records must be entered within 2 business days of occurrence) and completeness of required data elements.

### **QUESTIONS RECEIVED WEEK OF JULY 4, 2022**

**Question 7: The RFP permits costs associated with hotel/motel stays to provide temporary housing for households engaged in housing relocation while conducting housing search and pre-residency inspections. Can an organization lease apartment units and charge a nightly rate to the agreement in lieu of hotel/motel rental?**

The ESG-CV Notice explicitly cites hotel/motel stays as an eligible cost. HUD guidance does not expressly permit the cost of leased apartments for this purpose. The City does agree that the use of leased apartments can provide a cost savings and has submitted a request to HUD for clarification and permission to use leased apartments provided that the total actual rent and utility costs incurred by the organization are charged to the apartment on a pro-rated nightly basis only for the nights in which an ESG-CV homelessness prevention enrolled household resides at the unit and the pro-rated nightly cost is equal to or less than the average cost of hotel/motel stays (using the Federal lodging rate established by the U.S. General Services Administration as the basis for determining average cost of nightly hotel/motel stay).

If HUD approves this request, the City will provide final guidance regarding HUD requirements and permit funded organizations to adjust their project budgets without increasing the total funded amount to make use of this option if the organization wishes to do so. Organizations should develop budgets assuming that only hotel/motel stays will be eligible until/unless HUD approval to include the cost of leased units is received by the City.

**Question 8: Can federal funds be counted as leverage toward the project?**

Federal funds can be counted as leverage toward the project. As outlined in the pre-proposal conference, leverage funds may only include funds that are directly used for the purpose of administering the ESG-CV project and may not include funds that are used to serve households enrolled in other projects administered by the organization including funds used for other homelessness prevention projects which serve households not enrolled in the ESG-CV project funded through this competition.

For example, organizations may count unrestricted funds that are applied to the overall administrative cost of the project consistent with the organization's allocation plan and/or can include federal or non-federal funds that support services provided by the organization and for which project participants will be eligible which are not funded through the ESG-CV award (classes, financial aid, behavioral health services, etc.) Projects may not count the total amount of those funds as project leverage; however, the leverage amount must be restricted to proportion of those funds which will be utilized by households enrolled in the ESG-CV project.

**Question 9: The RFP scoring criteria for Agency Experience states that applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which past performance outcomes, including those reported in the proposal, prior City of Tucson subawards, and/or prior Continuum of Care and Emergency Solution Grants projects reported by TPCH demonstrate achievement of outcomes stated in the scope of work. Can the City provide clarification regarding this criterion?**

The City evaluates project applications on the merit of the services provided and any available evidence that can be used to confirm the applicant organization's capacity to deliver on stated performance outcomes.

The Scope of Work included in the RFP includes the following performance metrics to which applicants must commit:

- 90% or more of households served will have known exit destinations reported in the HMIS.
- 80% or more of households served will exit to permanent housing destinations as reported in the HMIS.
- Project will maintain 90% or higher HMIS data quality.

In determining points awarded related to this criterion, the City will consider the organization's past performance on City funding awards and information provided in the organization's application regarding its outcomes on similar project types, as well as performance on Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions grant awards managed by the organization which are aggregated and reported by the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) on a quarterly basis. This approach is intended to ensure that organizations selected for funding have a demonstrated track record of successfully delivering homelessness prevention and re-housing services at or near the performance threshold requirements indicated in the scope of work and cited above.