

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
HUDRD - Exploring Office to Residential Conversions (HUDRD-EORC)
FR-6700-N-29L

Frequently Asked Questions

09/08/2023

1. While the NOFO states a desired interest to focus on cities, would it be acceptable to address the research questions by focusing data collection on developers?

The NOFO states the study objectives on pages 5-6. PD&R expects that addressing objective 1 would likely require data collection from cities officials, administrators, or staff. On page 29, the NOFO describes rating factors that will be used to assess proposals. Rating Factor 1, states that proposals will be rated on whether they address the study objectives.

2. Who is eligible to apply for this grant opportunity?

Eligible applicants include public and state-controlled institutions of higher education, Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, Private institutions of higher education, For-profit organizations, small businesses, Hispanic-serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions.

3. Who is not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity?

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards made under this announcement.

4. How much funding is available through this NOFO?

Funding of approximately **\$860,000** is available through this NOFO.

5. How many awards does HUD expect to make under this NOFO?

HUD may award one or multiple awards for this NOFO. Applicants can request up to \$860,000 in funding. If HUD decides to make multiple awards under this NOFO, the total funding of all awards combined will not exceed \$860,000.

6. Will the funds be disbursed over 18-months or in one lump sum?

Funding is not awarded as a lump sum. Grantees will draw down funding over the course of the term of the grant in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of their award, which will be established upon selection for award.

7. Will this funding opportunity be recurring? Will there be additional rounds of funding?

No, HUD does not expect funds to be recurring or to award additional rounds of funding for this opportunity.

8. Will HUD have the option of awarding grants at an amount lower than what is requested by applicants?

Yes, HUD reserves the right to fund less than the amount requested in an application. Please see Section VI. A.2., *Adjustments to Funding*.

9. In the NOFO, the estimated project start and end date span 30-months (02/01/2024 - 08/01/2026), but the length of project period is specified as 18-months. Which funding period is intended?

The estimated funding period for this NOFO is 18-months for both the project and budget period (02/01/2024 – 08/01/2025). Please note that the start date is an estimate and could change depending on when the grant is awarded and executed, but will remain within a period of 18 months.

10. Can the grant period of performance be less than 18-months?

The period of performance is 18-months, but applicants may propose a period of performance that is less than 18-months.

11. What types of proposals or projects is HUD seeking to support under this NOFO?

HUD is seeking research proposals from eligible applicants that address the study objectives and research questions outlined under the “Funding Opportunity Description” of this NOFO, within Section I.A.1. Eligible applicants are encouraged to carefully review and address the “Rating Criteria” in this NOFO, under Section V.A.

12. Are applicants required to have matching funds available in order to be eligible for this funding opportunity?

No. This Program does not require cost sharing or matching.

13. I am an eligible applicant seeking funding to convert an office building to properties with residential units. Am I eligible for this grant?

No. Funding to be awarded under this grant program is for research purposes, not for the direct use of conversion or adaptive reuse activities. The research funded under this NOFO will lay the groundwork for future studies contributing to general knowledge on the topic of office-to-residential conversions since the start of the pandemic, including the policy landscape, construction challenges, financial tools available for these conversions, and other policy interventions. Please visit www.grants.gov to identify other funding opportunities that may be available for your intended purpose.

14. How can I access a copy of the full Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) document?

A direct link to the NOFO on HUD's website can be found here:

- https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/SPM/documents/FR-6700-N-29L_EORC_NOFO.pdf

Alternatively, applicants can access the NOFO through grants.gov:

- Go to this link: [FR-6700-N-29L HUDRD-EORC NOFO to Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov/grants/FR-6700-N-29L-HUDRD-EORC-NOFO) (alternatively, you can access www.grants.gov and type "FR-6700-N-29L" into the search bar).
- Click on the "related documents" tab.

Click on the hyperlink under "file name" that reads "Foa_content_of_FR-6700-N-29L" and this will download the text of the full funding announcement as a PDF file.

15. The application package states that applicants must submit HUD Form 424-CBW: Grant Application Detailed Budget Worksheet with their application. How do I access the HUD Form 424-CBW?

Follow these steps to access the full NOFO, mandatory and optional forms:

- Go to this link: [FR-6700-N-29L HUDRD-EORC NOFO to Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov/grants/FR-6700-N-29L-HUDRD-EORC-NOFO) (alternatively, you can access www.grants.gov and type "FR-6700-N-29L" into the search bar).
- Select the tab "Package" and under "Opportunity Package(s) Currently Available for this Funding Opportunity:" click on the "Preview" link.
- In the dialogue box that opens, click on the "Download Instructions" button.
- In the zip folder that opens, you will find the HUD Form 424-CBW: Grant Application Detailed Budget Worksheet along with the HUD Form 424-CBW-I, which provides instructions for completing the HUD Form 424-CBW.

16. What is the difference between the list of references and the list of entities with whom the applicant has entered into an agreement to participate in an award under this NOFO?

The relevant section of the NOFO is Section IV.B. titled *Content and Form of Application Submission*. Under Section IV.B.1 titled *Content*, the NOFO states that a complete application must include two separate appendices: 1) an appendix that list the names of the entities with whom the applicant has entered into an agreement to participate in an award under this NOFO and a brief statement of each entity's qualifications. and 2) an appendix containing a list of references outlining the applicant's performance of recent (within five years) and relevant social science research.

In Section IV.B.2. of the NOFO, titled *Format and Form*, the NOFO notes that there is a 20-page maximum length of narratives, but that the narrative page limits do not include the appendix of participating entities or the appendix of reference letters. Participating entities include any partners that the applicant may be bringing together to carry out the project proposed under this grant (item #1 above), and the reference letters are supporting documentation of past performance on recent and relevant social science research (item #2 above). Further description of the required data to be included in the references of past performance can be found under Rating Factor 3: *Organizational Capacity and Experience and Project Staffing*.

17. The NOFO states that “Key personnel must include, at a minimum, the Principal Investigator and Project Manager/Director.” Does HUD have specific requirements around what “Project Manager/Director” means?

The relevant section of the NOFO is Section V.A., *Review Criteria*. Under Rating Factor 3b., the NOFO outlines how applicants are expected to describe the project staffing anticipated for the proposed project. In this NOFO, HUD does not define the specific requirements for what constitutes a “Project Manager/Director.” Typically, under a research grant, the Principal Investigator would serve as the scientific director of the research project and the Project Manager/Director would serve as the project manager of the research project. HUD recognizes that organizations and institutions have different titles for these functions. Rating Factor 3b. states that to receive full points for the *Project Staffing* subfactor, a member of the Key Personnel must have demonstrated experience completing a research project in adaptive reuse/building conversions.

18. Is there a typical expectation or norm around the level of percent effort from the Principal Investigator and other Key Personnel?

This is a new grant opportunity and HUD does not have a typical expectation or norm around the level of percent effort from the Principal Investigator or other Key Personnel. Relevant sections of the NOFO include Section V.A., *Review Criteria*. Under Rating Factor 2a., *Management and Work Plan*, the NOFO directs applicants to include a staffing chart showing the allocation of resources for this project by presenting total person hours for each of the Key Personnel by year by project task. The proposed work plan must clearly explain how the applicant will manage these proposed project activities with the staff that are proposed. Rating Factor 3b., *Project Staffing* notes that staff assigned to different tasks should have the relevant skills and abilities to fulfill the tasks they will perform.

19. Are there salary caps for Key Personnel?

This NOFO is a federal grant and will follow the rules outlined in 2 CFR 200. The relevant reference describing parameters related to compensation, can be found in [§ 200.430 Compensation—Personal Services](#).

20. Should we list Key Personnel in the narrative or appendix?

Per Section V.A., *Review Criteria* of the NOFO, for each recent project discussed in the narrative statement under Rating Factor 3, the applicant should include the names of Key Personnel and any other staff who worked on the project and are proposed for the work under this NOFO.

21. Should we create a separate budget narrative for key personnel or incorporate those details into one narrative in our proposal?

Your complete application must include, among other things: an appendix containing up to 3 resumes of key personnel, and the budget narrative. Please refer to Section IV.B., *Content and Form of Application Submission* of the NOFO for a list and description of required materials.

22. Should we budget for the editing and preparation of the final report? Is editing and preparation something HUD undertakes?

Section I.A.1. of the NOFO states that “Final work products must be well-written, and the final research report must be of publishable quality and will conform to HUD’s formatting requirements. HUD intends to publish the final research report on our website at www.huduser.gov.” It is further stated in Section VI.C.4. that “The Final Report should be edited and prepared for publication in accordance with HUD’s [Guidelines for Preparing a Report for Publication](#).” Grantees will be expected to submit a final report that is of publishable quality, but HUD will conduct one final round of professional editing on any reports that will be published on PD&R’s website (www.huduser.gov).

23. What is the difference between the Principal Investigator and Project Manager/Director? Can they be the same person?

The Principal Investigator and Project Manager/Director should not be the same person. Typically, under a research grant, the Principal Investigator serves as the scientific director of the research project and the Project Manager/Director serves as the project manager of the research project, and is typically responsible for communication with HUD’s GTR. HUD recognizes that organizations and institutions have different titles for these functions. Please see Section V.A. *Review Criteria* of the

NOFO. Rating Factor 3b states that staff assigned to different tasks should have the relevant skills and abilities to fulfill the tasks that they will perform.

24. Are Co-Principal Investigators allowable? We would like to have more than one Principal Investigator.

The NOFO includes no prohibitions on the inclusion of Co-Principal Investigators.

25. Do the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator have to be from an academic institution?

The NOFO does not include language that requires the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator to be affiliated with an academic institution. Key personnel, including Principal Investigators, may be in-house staff, sub-awardees, and/or consultants for whom a contract or agreement already exists.

26. In Section IV.B.2. of the NOFO, titled *Format and Form*, the NOFO states that the application narrative must be double spaced 12-point (minimum) Times Roman font on letter sized paper (8 1/2 x 11 inches) with at least 1-inch margins on all sides. Does this formatting requirement apply to graphics, tables, and inset boxes?

The requirement for double-spacing is only for the text included in the narrative section of the proposal. Graphics, tables, or inset boxes can be formatted normally and do not need to be adjusted to “doubled spaced.” The total narrative addressing rating factors (including text, graphics, tables, etc) should not exceed 20 pages.

27. Do resumes submitted with an application need to be double-spaced, with one-inch margins using Times New Roman 12-point font?

This NOFO does not require the resumes to be double spaced. The requirement for double-spacing is only for the text included in the narrative section of the proposal.

28. Is the 20-page limit for the narrative statement addressing the rating factors inclusive of supporting exhibits?

The narrative addressing rating factors should not exceed 20 pages. The narrative page limits do not include *required* attachments, including forms, assurances and certifications, the appendix of participating entities, the appendix of resumes, the appendix of reference letters, Appendix A, the budget narrative, and the one-page abstract. The 20-page limit is inclusive of any other appendices or supporting exhibits to the narrative statement addressing the rating factors. Information in this

NOFO pertaining to the application submission requirements can be found in Section IV., *Application and Submission Information; Section 1. Content*.

29. Can bibliographic citations for the proposal be included as a separate attachment or would these need to be included in the 20-page narrative?

Information pertaining to the application submission requirements can be found in Section IV., *Application and Submission Information; Section 1. Content*. There is no reference to bibliographic citations as a separate non-form attachment in the NOFO, and therefore this information should be woven into the narrative addressing the rating factors (which should not exceed 20 pages) or incorporated into the list of references outlining the applicant's performance of recent (within five years) and relevant social science research.

30. Should I submit reference letters or a list of references?

Section IV.B.1, *Content* references an “appendix containing a list of references outlining the applicant’s past performance of recent (within 5 years) and relevant social science research” and Section IV.B.2, *Form* references “the appendix of reference letters.” HUD will accept **either** a list of references **or** reference letters, as long as the submitted materials provide evidence of the applicant’s past performance of recent (within 5 years) and relevant social science research.

Applicants should also refer to the Section V.A., *Review Criteria* under Rating Factor 3a., *Organizational Capacity and Experience* for additional details regarding how HUD will evaluate applicant’s past performance.

31. Is it appropriate to have references from someone currently employed at HUD?

The NOFO states only that references should have both recency and relevancy. There are no stated prohibitions on who can supply the references.

32. We are working to update our active UEI status. Are we still eligible to apply if we do not have active UEI status prior to the application deadline?

The applicant must obtain their active UEI status prior to the application deadline. Entities doing business with the federal government must use the UEI created in sam.gov. You must provide a valid UEI, registered and activated at www.sam.gov/content/home in the application.

33. My organization requires approval by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research projects. Should I be seeking IRB approval prior to application submission?

HUD does not require seeking or obtaining IRB approval during the application stage.

34. Should I submit instruments or surveys as part of my application?

You do not need to include instruments and surveys as part of the grant application. You may discuss these items in your narrative response, especially in your response to Rating Factor 2 on *Soundness of Approach*. Please refer to Section V.A., *Review Criteria* of the NOFO for details on how your application will be scored.

35. The NOFO states that a total of 4 preference points is available. Minority serving institutions are eligible for 2 points. How can we get the 2 additional preference points?

The maximum number of preference points under this funding opportunity is 2 points for applicants that meet the requirements outlined in Section V.A., *Review Criteria* of the NOFO. The maximum number of preference points for **any NOFO** is 4 points. For this particular funding opportunity, however, applicants can receive a maximum of 2 preference points.

36. Will HUD be holding office hours to discuss the application process for this grant?

HUD does not have plans to hold office hours about this application process, but we encourage you to check in on this Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) page, accessible at the following link: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/spm/gmomgmt/grantsinfo/fundingopps/hudrd, which is updated regularly as new questions are submitted.

37. Can I speak to someone at HUD about the funding opportunity and/or about my proposal?

We are unable to hold meetings with individual applicants, as we need to ensure that all applicants have access to the same information during the application period. However, we will address any questions submitted in writing. The submitted question, and the response provided by HUD, will be added to this Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) page, which is accessible at the following link: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/spm/gmomgmt/grantsinfo/fundingopps/hudrd. The FAQ page is updated regularly as new questions are submitted.

38. What other funding opportunities are available?

Please visit www.grants.gov for other available funding opportunities.

39. Whom should I contact if I have additional questions?

Additional questions may be referred to D'Andre Chambers at dandre.d.chambers@hud.gov

We will also be posting answers to FAQs here:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/spm/gmomgmt/grantsinfo/fundingopps/hudrd

Please check back regularly to monitor new information regarding this NOFO opportunity.