

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Office of Grants Management
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

FY26 Lighthouse Grant Program

Program Summary: The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) is soliciting grant applications for the County's Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Lighthouse Grant Program from qualified organizations. The FY26 Lighthouse Grant Program will provide one umbrella (lead) organization a total of \$3,504,636.00 in county funds to design, implement and manage a countywide collaborative initiative to deliver comprehensive services to support socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals and families navigating challenges related to immigration status within the County. As these individuals and families acclimate and thrive in their new community, they may encounter various vulnerabilities and systemic barriers, including challenges in immigration status and accessing critical basic needs such as housing, education, immigration legal services, and healthcare. Addressing these needs effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner is essential for individual and family stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency. Applicants must establish formal partnerships with local community organizations to ensure a diverse, coordinated, and community-driven approach that is responsive to changing political landscapes and community needs. Through effective collaboration, applicants are expected to maximize resources, expand service provision, and enhance the effectiveness of long-term integration and self-sufficiency for all priority populations.

Successful applicants must emphasize integrated and collaborative, evidence-based approaches through the provision of culturally and linguistically diverse services to achieve the following:

- a. Develop a comprehensive intake and needs assessment system that accurately identifies types and accesses levels of needs of individuals and families within the priority populations
- b. Provide navigation and guidance to connect individuals and families within priority populations to local systems such as housing, healthcare, education, and immigration legal services
- c. Provide emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization
- d. Provide intensive case management services to individuals and families in need to advance their journey towards achieving long-term integration and self-sufficiency
- e. Formalized partnerships with other community organizations to maximize impact and expand the reach of this program. The selected umbrella organization must demonstrate a strong track record of coalition building, administrative and fiscal management, service delivery, community collaboration, and organizational capacity building. The goal of this program is to support stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency for the priority populations while strengthening the network of local community-based organizations serving the priority populations.

Key Program Dates:

- **Program Opens for Applications:** Tuesday August 12, 2025 at 5:00 PM
- **MS Teams Live Online Grant Program Information Session:** Tuesday, August 19, 2025 from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
- **Submission Deadline:** Wednesday September 10, 2025 at 11:59 PM

Key Program Resources:

- **Program Page:** https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/i1163fnghgfr
- [Link to the August 19, 2025 Information Session OR a recording of the event](#)
- [OGM Board Race-Ethnicity Reporting Template](#)

Grant Program Details, Submissions, and Support: Application details can be downloaded and application may be submitted through OGM's Online Grants Application Platform through the links above. Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management to discuss alternative submission options. Applications that are incomplete, do not meet legal requirements, or are submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

For general questions, platform support, or for alternate ADA submission options please contact the Office of Grants Management using the contact information below. For any technical questions related to the Grant Program please contact HHS using the contact information below:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I	Grant Program Information	4-12
	Background	4
	Priority Population	5
	Funding Priorities	5
	Project and Organization Eligibility	6-7
	Eligible and Ineligible Expenses	7-8
	Award Information	8
	Award Reporting Requirements	9-10
	Application Review & Awards	10
	Award Notification	10
	Submission Guidelines	11
	Information Session	11
	Terms and Conditions	12
Section II	Application Tasks	12-19
Section III	Scoring of Applications	20-22
	Scoring Criteria	20-22
	Miscellaneous	22
Section IV	Certifications, Acknowledgements, & Assurances	22-24

SECTION I – GRANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. Background

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) are soliciting grant applications for the County's Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Lighthouse Grant Program from qualified organizations. The FY26 Lighthouse Grant Program will provide one umbrella (lead) organization a total of \$3,504,636.00 in county funds to design, implement and manage a countywide collaborative initiative to deliver comprehensive services to support socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals and families navigating challenges related to immigration status within the County. As these individuals and families acclimate and thrive in their new community, they may encounter various vulnerabilities and systemic barriers, including challenges in immigration status and accessing critical basic needs such as housing, education, immigration legal services, and healthcare. Addressing these needs effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner is essential for individual and family stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency. Applicants must establish formal partnerships with local community-serving organizations to ensure a diverse, coordinated, and community-driven approach that is responsive to changing political landscapes and community needs. Through effective collaboration, applicants are expected to maximize resources, expand service provision, and enhance the effectiveness of long-term integration and self-sufficiency for all priority populations.

HHS will provide one award of \$3,504,636.00 to one organization to serve as the lead umbrella organization, responsible for the management of the grant. The umbrella (lead) organization may apply as the grant administrator only or as both the grant administrative agency and service provider. The umbrella organization is responsible for equitably distributing available funding to local community-based organizations through formalized partnerships. The umbrella organization, along with its formalized partners are expected to provide personalized, need-based intensive case management and navigation services to address the health and human service needs of individuals and families within the priority populations. Services offered include, but are not limited to, health and human services, housing, education, employment, and immigration legal services. To maximize impact, applicants are expected to design, implement, and evaluate a model that accurately assesses and identifies the needs of individuals and families, organizes needed support into different tiers, and responds effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to address the complex needs of the priority populations. The project period is from October 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, with a potential one time no-cost extension until October 1, 2026. Any future funding outside of the project period is contingent on Council appropriations for FY27. Successful applicants must emphasize integrated and collaborative, evidence-based approaches through the provision of culturally and linguistically diverse services to achieve the following:

- a. Develop a comprehensive intake and needs assessment system that accurately identifies types and accesses levels of needs of individuals and families within the priority populations
- b. Provide navigation and guidance to connect individuals and families within priority populations to local systems such as housing, healthcare, education, and immigration legal services
- c. Provide emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization
- d. Provide intensive case management services to individuals and families in need to advance their journey towards achieving long-term integration and self-sufficiency

- e. Formalized partnerships with other community organizations to maximize impact and expand the reach of this program. The selected umbrella organization must demonstrate a strong track record of coalition building, administrative and fiscal management, service delivery, community collaboration, and organizational capacity building. The goal of this program is to support stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency for the priority populations while strengthening the network of local community-based organizations serving the priority populations.

About the Office of Grants Management: As charged in Bill 36-19, the OGM provides a central point of contact regarding the grants that the County receives or awards. The OGM also develops countywide policies and procedures regarding grants management and ensures these are consistent with racial equity and social justice goals, performs outreach regarding grants offered by the County and other grants functions. For additional information on other Montgomery County grant programs, please visit the [OGM's County homepage](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ogm/) at <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ogm/>.

B. Priority Population

The priority populations for this grant are socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals and families navigating challenges related to immigration status within the County. As these individuals and families acclimate and thrive in their new community, they may encounter various vulnerabilities and systemic barriers, including challenges in immigration status and accessing critical basic needs such as housing, education, legal services, and healthcare. Addressing these needs effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner is essential for individual and family stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency.

Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate an understanding of the intersectional challenges faced by these populations and to address these challenges and barriers in the proposed program. In addition to serving populations from Central and South American countries, the program must also serve diverse priorities populations including those from African, Caribbean and Asian diaspora countries by establishing formalized partnerships with community-serving organizations working in these communities.

C. Funding Priorities

The goal of the Lighthouse Grant program is to support stabilization, integration and self-sufficiency while strengthening the network of local community-based organizations serving the priority populations. Priority in awarding funding will be given to proposals that demonstrate that the organization can provide effective grants management oversight; and partner with other community organizations to deliver high quality services that lead to the stabilization, integration and self-sufficiency of the priority populations. Additionally, the proposal should address the complex and changing needs of diverse priority populations through effective formalized partnerships. The umbrella organization is required to offer technical assistance to support its formalized partners in meeting administrative, fiscal, and programmatic expectations to ensure the services offered by this grant program are delivered effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.

Applicants are required to collaborate with other local community organizations and must demonstrate these formalized partnerships in their application through letters of commitment (LOC). Proposals should outline how partners will work together to enhance program reach to diverse priority populations, coordinate services, collect and manage data, and maximize impact. All plans to share grant resources and manage initiatives must be clearly outlined and

detailed where applicable in the proposal. Any proposed formalized partnerships should detail the partner organizations scope, budget and how these awards will be monitored for impact and financial compliance. Strong applications will include LOC's or other evidence of collaboration, showing how organizations will share resources, expertise, and community connections to effectively engage and serve the priority populations.

D. Project and Organization Eligibility

Applicants and their proposed projects must meet all of the following Eligibility requirements below to be considered for funding. **Applicants may only submit one application per organization under this NOFO.**

Organizational Eligibility Criteria:

- **Have Experience Serving the Priority Populations** – Organizations must demonstrate prior experience working with the priority populations as defined as section B.
- **Show Capacity for Program Implementation** – Applicants must have the necessary staff, infrastructure, and partnerships to successfully stand up, implement, and evaluate the proposed initiative in a timely manner. Including a minimum of three (3) years of experience managing multisector collaborations, and/or coordinating community-based programs serving the priority populations with cultural competency. Applicants must demonstrate their plan for monitoring compliance, data reporting and fiscal accountability among its community partners with formalized partnerships, as well as a plan to deliver technical assistance to build formalized partners' capacity to meet the expectations of the grant program. Applicants must demonstrate effort to proactively and regularly seek input from stakeholders, including community members and representatives with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project. The stakeholders should reflect the diversity of the priority populations and are meaningfully engaged in providing input and feedback on policies, practice and service within the scope of the Lighthouse grant program.
- **Be Located in or Primarily Serve the Priority Community** – Organizations should either be physically based in areas where priority populations reside, or have a well-established track record of effectively serving and engaging the specific populations they intend to support
- **Comply with Financial and Reporting Requirements** – Awardees, including its formalized partners must adhere to all grant reporting, evaluation, and accountability measures.

Program Eligibility Criteria:

- **Utilize Evidence-Based or Promising Practices** – Programs should be informed by research, best practices, or emerging strategies that show effectiveness in addressing the needs and serving the priority populations.
- **Include a Collaborative Approach** – Organizations are required to establish formalized partnerships with other community-based organizations and provide evidence of collaboration such as LOC within their proposal.
- **Demonstrate Cultural and Community Relevance** – Proposals must demonstrate an understanding of and responsiveness to the unique needs of the priority populations. The proposal must include detailed plans and evidence of formalized partnerships to serve all priority populations. These populations include, but are not limited to, individuals and families from African, Caribbean and Asian diaspora countries as well as Central and

South American countries. Strong applications will detail language access plans for serving linguistically diverse populations.

- **Provide Measurable Outcomes** – Applications must outline clear, measurable objectives and methods for tracking and evaluating success. The objectives are expected to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). The selected grantee will be required to report collective outcomes and data points, including those from both umbrella organization and its formalized partners according to guidance from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services in a timely manner.
- **Operate a Case Management System** - The umbrella organization is responsible for ensuring compliance with DHHS data reporting standards for itself and all sub-grantees with whom the umbrella organization partners. At minimum, the umbrella organization must have a case management system with a schema and codebook that define how the system:
 - a) tracks demographic characteristics of interest (i.e., age, gender, race, ethnicity; country of origin, preferred language, zip code, and length of stay in the US);
 - b) uniquely identifies and tracks individual clients or customers over time;
 - c) uniquely identifies and tracks households and household composition over time;
 - d) tracks specific instances of activity, assessments, and referrals over time;
 - e) associates individuals and households with activities, assessments, and referrals; and
 - f) dispositions activities and referrals.

DHHS will review the codebook and schema, and DHHS may request additional review with the umbrella organization to ensure compliance with DHHS data reporting standards. If the schema does not satisfy DHHS's data reporting standards, DHHS may recommend possible changes to the umbrella organization's case management system. If those changes are not feasible, DHHS may require the umbrella organization to use a DHHS-approved platform to record data in specific circumstances.

Montgomery County Eligibility Conditions:

- The organization must be currently registered and in Good Standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT);
- The organization's principal place of business must be located in Montgomery County; if a national or regional organization, it must have a location in Montgomery County through which it provides related services;
- All activities and expenditures under this Grant Program must be provided in Montgomery County, and be exclusively for Montgomery County residents;
- Current Montgomery County contract or grant award winners must be in performance compliance and current on all reporting obligations for other awards and those reports must reflect substantial progress towards the goals of their awards; and
- Proposed expenses must be for a new activity, expansion of existing activities, or a combination of both. County funding cannot be used to supplant other funding for already planned activities.

E. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Awards will cover operating expenses related to the implementation of this Grant Program. The proposed expenses must all have a justified relationship to the project and fall into one of the categories below:

- Personnel – Staff salaries;
- Fringe Benefits – Health insurance and other staff benefits;
- Travel – Transportation stipends, vehicle operation, or public transportation vouchers;
- Equipment – Items individually worth less than \$5,000 but more than \$200;
- Supplies – Items individually worth less than \$200;
- Contractual – Contractors for services or training as well as licenses;
- Formalized Partners – Community organizations which are part of the effort to provide service to priority populations
- Construction – Renovation or other construction related expenses;
- Other – Any other project related costs that do not fit into the categories above
- Indirect Charges – Applicants should include an Indirect Rate of up to 15% based on the total direct costs (all categories above) as part of their project. Organizations who can demonstrate an approved federal NICRA indirect rate above 15% may charge that rate instead. The indirect rate of formalized partners must not be higher than 15%.

Eligible expenses within these categories include direct cost for Formalized Partners (organizations that will share grant funds for implementation of the project) in the applicable category. The Grant Program encourages the use of Sub-Grantees (Community Based Organizations who receive grants from the applicant) to further the goals of the project through independent sub-awards. Sub-Grant costs should be categorized under the Other category. Further instructions on the budget are detailed in the Application Tasks section of this NOFO.

This Grant Program will **not** fund the following expenses:

- Grant funds can't be used to purchase goods or services from Board Members' organizations
- Any purchase or activity which has already been made outside the grant award period of performance
- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes
- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the Grantee
- Lobbying
- To supplant (replace) funds from other grant sources

Applicants are encouraged to vet with OGM potential costs prior to submitting application to ensure it is eligible.

F. Award Information

HHS anticipates making one award to one umbrella organization. The project period is from October 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, with a potential one time no-cost extension until October 1, 2026. Any future funding outside of the project period is contingent on Council appropriations for FY27. This Grant Program does not commit Montgomery County to make any awards. The funds from this grant awards will be released in stages based on submission and grant monitor approval of programmatic and financial reports. For the first stage, 25% of the funds will be available at the launch of the project. For the second stage, 25% of the funds will be available after December 1, 2025. For the third stage, 25% of the funds will be available after March 1, 2026. For the fourth stage, 20% of the funds will be available after June 1, 2026, and the remaining funds (5%) will be available after final programmatic and financial reports are accepted by DHHS.

G. Award Reporting Requirements

Award winners will be required to submit bimonthly activity and financial progress reports detailing achievements, challenges, and lessons learned as well as spending against the award. In addition, recipients will be expected to participate in monthly check-ins with the Grantor to discuss progress on the project. The award winners will also be required to submit a comprehensive final activity and financial report summarizing the outcomes of the program, including data analysis, success stories, challenges, and recommendations as well as final spending under the grant. The final report is due within 90 days of completion of the Grant Term. These reports must include quantitative and qualitative data to illustrate program impact, such as participation rates, success stories, and pre/post-program evaluations as well as be consistent with the approved Monitoring and Evaluation Plan submitted as part of the proposal and integrated into the grant agreement. Both progress and final reports must include data that can be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, preferred language, country of origin, and zip code, etc.

Bimonthly reports should at minimum include the identified key data points as identified through collaboration with DHHS and the umbrella organization. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional data points to report the impact made by this grant program.

In coordination with DHHS, the umbrella organization is responsible for identifying key data points, designing the data collection and evaluation methods, and overall data quality and reliability of the overall grant program, including its formalized partners. In addition to bimonthly and final reports, the umbrella organization is also expected to provide accurate, high quality and robust responses to HHS data and information requests when requested within 5 business days. Some data and information requests may require the umbrella organization to report information by using disaggregated data to demonstrate intersectionality.

The bimonthly and final reports should include at least the following:

- Program achievements
 - Cumulative performance data for entire grant period
 - Without compromising privacy, awardees are encouraged to submit success stories and testimonials about individuals, families, and community partners demonstrating positive impact
 - Narrative on impact on the broader community, e.g. strengthening local partnerships, removing systematic barriers, increasing quality, efficiency and effectiveness of care
- Challenges, barriers and recommendations
 - Barriers to support families and/or individuals to reach long term integration and self-sufficiency
 - Program implementation challenges
 - Collaboration challenges
 - Unmet needs identified
 - Key takeaways and recommendations for future programs
- Program outcomes/
 - Number of individuals expressed urgent needs reach stabilization
 - Number of families expressed urgent needs reach stabilization
 - Number of individuals initiated their journey to achieve long term integration and self-sufficiency
 - Number of families initiated their journey to achieve long term integration and self-sufficiency

- sufficiency
 - Number of individuals reach long term integration and self sufficiency
 - Number of families reach long term integration and self sufficiency
- Program reached and participants served
 - General programmatic matrix and outputs
 - Number of new cases by month
 - Number of closed cases by month
 - Number of active cases
 - Number of individuals and families served by the entire Lighthouse program
 - Number of service request encounters by individuals and families
 - Number of service request encounters in progress by individuals and families
 - Number of service request encounters fulfilled by individuals and families
 - Number of individuals and families served by the umbrella organization and each formalized partner
 - Number of individuals and families received emergency support for family stabilization
 - Number of individuals and families received navigation and guidance support to receive services in the local systems.
 - Number of individuals and families received intensive case management services
 - Number of individuals and families left the Lighthouse Grant Program and reasons
 - Participants demographics
 - Individuals: age, gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, preferred language, zip code, length of stay in the US,
 - Families (household profile): household size, household composition by age, relationship to the head of household.

H. Application Review & Awards

HHS will recruit an independent Review Committee that will develop and submit recommendations for funding. The Review Committee will be composed of neutral, qualified individuals from Montgomery County Government, and possibly the broader Montgomery County community, selected for their experiences in the Grant Program's subject area, project administration/management, and/or ability to analyze programs from a Racial Equity and Social Justice or cultural competency lens. The panel members will review and score applicant proposals based on the criteria outlined in this NOFO and submit recommendations for awards. Final decisions will be made based on the scores and such other factors and considerations as the County deems relevant at the time of award. These may include, but are not limited to, updated consideration of how well the applicant has performed on prior programs, the expert opinion of grant administrators with prior experience with applicants, updates to priorities, or other factors.

I. Award Notification

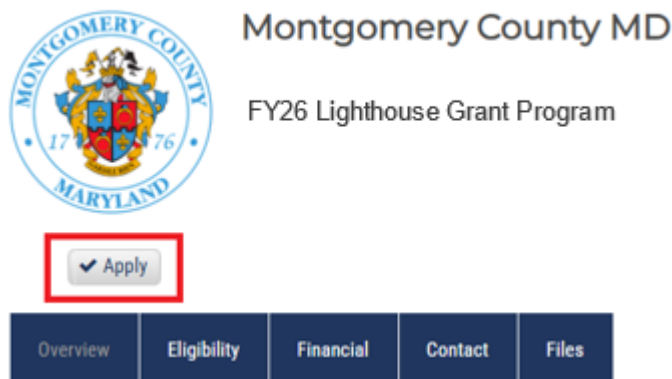
Award notification letters are expected to be released roughly one month after the application deadline via email and the grants management platform. For successful applicants, the Grant Agreement will contain the total amount awarded and funding restrictions; programmatic, administrative, and policy requirements; reporting requirements; and payment terms.

J. Submission Guidelines

NOTICE: This grant program application and future grant opportunities released through the Office of Grants Management will no longer be using SM Apply to accept grant applications. This grant program will be using a new grant platform called Euna Grants (eCivis). Instructions for setting up an account are listed below. An information session will be held to walk through this process.

How to Apply:

1. **Log into the Euna (eCivis) Portal to create an application profile**
<https://portal.ecivis.com/#/login>
2. **While logged in, access the [FY26 Lighthouse Grant Program Solicitation Page](#) and click the “Apply” button. You will be routed to your Euna profile where you can click “Create an Application”.**



3. **Download and review the Euna (eCivis) applicant user guides for assistance:**
 1. [Logging into Your eCivis Portal Account](#)
 2. [Reviewing and Submitting your application](#)
 3. [Transfer Application Ownership](#)
 4. [Guide for Applicants](#), including budget assistance

After creating an account, an applicant must select this Grant Program from the [OGM homepage](#). The applicant will then be able to create an application for this Grant Program within the Euna Grants platform. Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management to discuss alternative submission options.

Applications are due no later than Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 11:59 PM. All applications will be recorded upon receipt. Applications received after the deadline will be disqualified and will not be forwarded to the Review Panel for funding considerations. Any additions or deletions to an application, unless requested by the Office of Grants Management will not be accepted after the deadline. Applications with incomplete, illegible, or corrupted digital materials will not be considered. Please note that technical assistance for applicants will not be available outside of normal business hours.

K. Information Session

A Grant Program Information Session will be held on **Tuesday, August 19, 2025 from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**. The link to participate in the Information Session live or to view an event recording afterwards can be found on the first page of this document or on the grant application page.

L. Terms and Conditions

- County reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the County determines it is in the best interest of the County to do so. The County shall notify the applicant if it rejects that applicant's proposal. The County reserves the right to suspend or terminate an outstanding Grant Program.
- The County reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the posting of a Grant Program.
- The County shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the Grant Program. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility.
- The County may conduct pre-award on-site visits or request additional information to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services proposed.
- The County may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revisions for the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations. The County shall provide the citations to the statute and implementing regulations that authorize the grant or sub-grant; all applicable federal, State, and County regulations; payment provisions identifying how the grantee will be paid for performing under the award; reporting requirements, including programmatic, financial and any special reports required by federal, state, or County law and/or the granting department; and compliance conditions that must be met by the grantee. If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the Grant Program and any applicable federal, State, or County law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control, and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

SECTION II – APPLICATION TASKS

Applicants are required to follow the content requirements and submission instructions listed within the online application platform and the NOFO document. Please submit your proposal, as broken out by each of the Task, by filling out the data fields or uploading documents where applicable. Uploaded documents should have clearly titled sections and sub-sections. Document uploads should ideally be submitted as PDF documents with budgets uploaded as MS Excel file. The application platform cannot read Mac formatted documents (i.e. Pages, Numbers, and Key Note) so these should be submitted as PDFs or converted to MS Office formats. **Applications will be considered incomplete if any part of any section is missing.**

To maximize the opportunity to receive a high score on the proposal, applicants are encouraged to read the entire NOFO document carefully. Please note that Review Committees have historically preferred concise narratives focused on the funding priorities, questions asked, and scoring themes rather than long narrative descriptions.

A. Lead Applicant Information Task

Organizations must provide the following information and documents using data entry fields or uploads. The document uploads will be used to assess legal eligibility for the Grant Program and data fields will be used populate any resulting grant agreement. Applicants should fill out this information as if they were drafting a contract using specific and exact information.

- Legal Name of Applying Organization as registered with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT)
- Organization's Maryland SDAT Department ID Number
- Montgomery County Supplier Number, if known (optional)
- Contact Information for the organization's proposal primary point-of-contact (POC)
- Contact Information for the organization's proposal secondary point-of-contact (POC)
- Link to Organization website (optional)

The County is required to check applicants' status of Good Standing (or equivalent status) with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) at the time of application review, finalization of grant agreements, and for payments during the life of a grant agreement. Although proof of Good Standing is not required as a component of the application, it is critical that Lead and Support organization applicants remain registered and in Good Standing with SDAT as applicants will be disqualified from a grant competition, delay or even lose a grant award, and/or face delays in grant payments if they are not in Good Standing.

Applicants can verify their status with SDAT via this link:

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>

B. Lead Applicant Background Task

The Office of Grants Management collects data through this Task for post-award analysis to understand application and award trends as well as how to support the diverse communities in Montgomery County. Data collected through this Task will **not** be visible to Review Committees and will **not** be used in evaluation and scoring of applications.

In line with Montgomery County's Racial Equity & Social Justice goals, the Office of Grants Management is collecting the racial and ethnic information on the leadership of nonprofit organizations. The structure of this portion of the survey is based on the new [federal standards for collecting this data](#). Note that the information entered should be based on how the person identifies themselves.

- Lead Organization estimated staffing size serving Montgomery County in a given year
- Lead Organization estimated budget, including by funding source, for Montgomery County programs, services, and other initiatives in a given year
- Lead Organizational leadership, including CEO or Executive Director and Board Members (if applicable), race and ethnic information

If choosing to provide race and ethnicity information for their board, applicants must use the [OGM Board Race-Ethnicity Reporting Template](#) and upload it into application.

Responding to these questions is optional and will have no impact on application reviews.

C. Project Scope of Work Task (Data fields and PDF upload)

The proposal's Project Scope of Work should answer in detail, each below bullet point. If an organization prefers, they may submit supporting materials to their Scope of Work responses in an alternative media format such as a video or audio recording with a copy of transcript. Because of upload size limits, please post your videos to YouTube or a similar platform and provide a hyperlink to the video within the applicable data field(s). If any bullet point below does not apply to your proposal, please indicate that it is not applicable.

Data Field Responses: Please answer the following questions within Euna data fields. Applicants should be mindful that the responses to these questions will be integrated directly into any resulting grant agreement.

1. **Project Title** – If awarded, the Project Title will become the name of the Grant Agreement (100 character maximum).
2. **Project Overview** – Provide a brief description of the project. This description of the project will be directly integrated into the Grant Agreement (600 character maximum).
3. **FY26 Lighthouse Grant Project Funding Request** – Total amount requested through this grant proposal. Click [on the Euna Grants Budget Tool](#) in the application platform to provide budget details (instructions below).
4. **Total Project Cost** – Total annual cost of project from all funding sources.

PDF Upload Responses: Combine responses to each of the questions into a single PDF document. Include each question in the document in the order given and adhere to each of the word limits. The text should be single spaced and in 12 point Times New Roman font. Applicants are welcome to include charts, graphics, tables, and other content to complement their narratives. Multi-media content such as videos may be used by uploading the content to an external site (i.e. Youtube) and providing the link within the PDF document. Answers that exceeds the character and/or word limits may be pushed back to applicants for revision or disqualified from consideration.

1. **Project Outcome** – Overall, how will the project create an intake and needs assessment system to provide navigation services, emergency supports, and intensive case management services that are culturally and linguistically responsive to address the

complex needs of diverse priority populations. Project outcomes should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). (900 words maximum).

2. **Evidence to Support Need and Priority Areas** – Describe the specific needs of diverse priority populations. Whenever possible use local data, assessments, or community input to support the identified needs and explain how the proposed project aligns with the grant program’s goals (600 words maximum).
3. **Activities** – Detail the actual activities from the umbrella organization and its formalized partners below. Goals and objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Applicants have the options of uploading additional media (i.e. charts, workflows, graphics, etc.) to more clearly illustrate activities outside of a pure narrative
 - **Outreach and engagement:** Detail your outreach and recruitment strategies to build trust and enroll individuals and families within the priority populations with a focus on ensuring diverse priority populations are served. Be sure to note relevant experience and past successes in this area (600 words maximum).
 - **A comprehensive intake and needs assessment system:** Detail the applicant’s plan to develop a comprehensive system that accurately identifies types and accesses levels of needs of individuals and families within the priority populations, organizes needed support into different tiers, and responds effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to provide personalized support at the appropriate level to maximize resources. (1,500 words maximum).
 - **Navigation service and guidance:** Provide the expected outputs and outcomes for this area of service. Explain what strategy will be implemented to connect priority populations to services. Describe how your strategy is supported by data, evidence, or promising practices. Detail how your strategy is designed to be impactful, effective, and efficient in providing support to individuals and families within priority populations. (1,500 words maximum).
 - **Emergency supports:** Provide the expected outputs and outcomes for this area of service. Explain what strategy will be implemented to provide emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization. Describe how your strategy is supported by data, evidence, or promising practices. Detail how your strategy is designed to be impactful, effective, and efficient in providing emergency support to individuals and families facing challenges related to immigration status. (1,500 words maximum).
 - **Intensive case management:** Provide the expected outputs and outcomes for this area of service. Explain what strategy will be implemented to provide intensive case management. Describe how your strategy is supported by data, evidence, or promising practices. Detail how your strategy is designed to be impactful, effective, and efficient in supporting individuals and families to achieve long-term integration and self-sufficiency. (1,500 words maximum).
 - **Collaborative approach:** How will your organization select and work with other community-based organizations through formalized partnerships to ensure individuals and families are able to access the services funded by the Lighthouse grant program? Please outline how partners will work together to enhance program reach, service coordination, and maximized impact. Detail your strategy to ensure efforts such as administrative, fiscal, programmatic, data collection, evaluation and reporting from the formalized partners are consistent throughout the project. Strong applications will include letters of commitment or other evidence of collaboration, showing how organizations will share resources, expertise, and community connections (600 words maximum)

4. **Project Implementation Capabilities** – What are your organization’s current capabilities to successfully implement the proposed project? Please note your capacity, including staff/volunteer and financial resources, to fulfill administrative, fiscal, and programmatic requirements to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate activities under the Lighthouse Grant Program as quickly as possible to meet the urgent needs of the diverse priority populations. (240 words maximum).
5. **Other Key Implementation Capabilities** – What is your organization’s capability to develop and implement this project in a culturally, linguistically, and/or technically proficient way for the diverse priority populations? Discuss your continued quality improvement efforts, including seeking input and feedback from stakeholders that reflect the diversity of priority populations and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project. Discuss how your organization, as the umbrella organization will handle the changing needs of the diverse priority populations and provide technical assistance for the selected partner organizations to meet administrative, fiscal and programmatic expectations to ensure the services offered by this grant program are delivered effectively in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to address the complex needs of the priority populations. (600 words maximum)
6. **Reduced Funding Impact** – Please specify how the project would be affected if total funding awarded were less than the amount requested. State whether your project could be completed with a smaller amount, and how a funding reduction would change implementation and outcomes (240 words maximum).

D. Implementation Timeline Task (2-page limit PDF format upload)

This section should outline the implementation schedule of the proposed project over a 9-month grant agreement period of performance with a potential no cost extension until October 1, 2026. The implementation start date for a proposal should begin no earlier than October 1, 2025 to account for the grant program’s selection and awarding process. The program is expected to be fully operational by October 1, 2025.

The implementation timeline over the performance period should list:

- The program’s objectives, related activities and expected outputs and outcomes;
- Timeline for implementation and completion; and
- Responsible staff and formalized partners for completing these activities (noting organizational affiliation).

Combine responses to each of the questions into a single PDF document, with a 2-page limit. The performance period may cover a generic period of time that is not tied to specific dates. The final performance period for an award will be contingent on when the actual grant agreement is signed by all parties.

Applicants have the option of uploading up to three additional supporting documents (i.e. manual from previous iteration of project, project workflow, or other graphics/charts demonstrating work). If a document is available through the internet a hyperlink or web address should instead be integrated into the narrative sections above as application. These attachments may be useful to the Review Committee in understanding the scope of the proposed project as well as demonstrating expertise on the part of the applying organization.

Applicants should not upload any documentation with sensitive information such as bank statements. If you uploaded optional supporting documents, please provide a short explanation of the uploaded documents in this field (600 character maximum).

E. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Task (4-page limit, PDF format)

The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan outlines how the applicant will measure the success for their proposed project and the benefits it will bring to Grant Program's Priority Populations. Combine responses to each of the questions below into a single PDF document, with a 4-page limit.

- **Monitoring Strategy** – Detail your strategy to implement a robust system for monitoring program progress, participant feedback, and outcome tracking (1,200 words).

Detail the **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** to be collected, targets for each metric, and the data collection method for each metric for each of the key categories listed below. Applicants may provide more than one measure for each of the categories. Both target outputs and outcomes should be included as applicable.

- Measures of Program Reach
 - Number of unduplicated individuals and families served
- Measure of Cumulative Participant Demographics
- Measures of Stability
- Measures of Community Integration
- Measure of Self Sufficiency
- Measures of Integrated Case Management
- Measures of Overall Program Outcomes and Impact

Organizations must expect that each disbursement of grant funds will require financial reporting detailing expenses incurred as well as written reports on the progress of the project.

F. Project Staffing Task (2-page limit, PDF format)

This section should detail the staff positions assigned or to be hired for the proposed project, their roles in the project, and percentage (%) of time spent on the project versus other efforts. If a position is not filled, a projected start date as to when the position will be filled should be supplied. If applying as a collaboration, please note the organizational affiliation of each staff member.

Notes on the Project Staffing Plan:

- Grantees in the past have sometimes had trouble hiring staff at very low wages; your application will not be penalized for proposing that staff be paid commensurate with their specialized talents and experience in delivering the proposed services.
- Similarly, applicants are encouraged to include staff to cover the implementation needs of the entire grant program, including and especially monitoring & evaluation and administrative capacity. Some applicants have underbudgeted staffing capacity to implement a grant funded project leading to reduced target outcomes.
- In past grant programs applicants have frequently received lower scores for not fully explaining why each position(s) was necessary for the proposed project. Applicants

should not assume a position's role in supporting the proposed project is intuitive and instead explain in detail.

The Project Staffing Plan documents for both the umbrella organization and the partner organizations should be uploaded and detail at a minimum for the incumbent(s), position(s) to be filled, and/or contractor(s) to be supported by the project:

- The position title;
- Expected salary or hourly rate for the position;
- Percentage of staff time will be dedicated to the proposed project; and
 - If an employee is 100% dedicated to this project and fully funded through grant funds from this program, all of their professional time, over and above routine administrative tasks, must be devoted to the proposed program's eligible work.
 - If the staff will at times contribute to organizational efforts outside the grant project, be sure to include only partial salary for that person in the staffing and budget proposals.
 - Do not double count staff time paid for by other Montgomery County, Federal, State, District of Columbia, or private foundation grants.
- Detailed description of the position role in relation to the proposed project.

Combine responses to each of the questions into a single PDF document, with a 2-page limit. The applicant will also have the option of uploading up to three documents (PDF format preferred) that complement the Staffing Plan; not replace it. These could include, but are not limited to, an organizational chart, resumes/CVs of key project leaders, position descriptions of unfilled roles, or other items that may be relevant.

G. Letters of Commitment (LOC) Among Collaborative Partners (no page limit, PDF format)

All applications are required to include a letter of commitment (LOC) between each listed partner organization that outlines roles and responsibilities for implementing the project. The LOC should also include an outline of how County grant funds will be disbursed among the collaborators. The LOC must be signed by duly authorized representatives of all collaborating organizations and may be as long as necessary. **Note that the organization submitting the application will be the one signing any awarded grant agreement and will be the one accountable to its terms.**

H. Budget Tool (Data Fields)

The proposal's budget should include a detailed listing of expenses and justification for administrative costs, outreach activities, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting. Detail your budget request by clicking on the Euna Grants Budget Tool in the application platform to open a new browser tab. The Euna Grants [Guide for Applicants](#) includes detailed guidance on pages 13-20 on how to fill out the Budget Tool. OGM will also demonstrate how to use the Budget Tool during the Grant Program's Information session. Enter your budget request using the federal objective class categories listed below. Add as many additional line-items underneath each category as required to explain your budget in detail.

Costs for Formalized Partners, community organizations which are part of the effort to provide service to priority populations, should be detailed in the budget under the appropriate category. Include in the Description field whether the costs will be for the prime applicant or to a specific formalized partner. The budget for sub-grants to Community Based Organizations must be

included in the Other category. Applicants are not expected to provide a detailed breakdown of what the sub-grants will cover.

1. **Personnel** – Staff salaries that will be charged to the grant. These may be all or a % of a staff members time. The relationship of this position to the proposed project must be detailed in the Budget Narrative below;
2. **Fringe Benefits** – Health insurance and other benefits for staff in the organization. If a Formalized Partner has a different Fringe rate then it should be calculated and included as a separate line-item with a name of the organization in the Description field;
3. **Travel** – Transportation stipends, vehicle operation, or public transportation vouchers;
4. **Equipment** – Items individually worth less than \$5,000 but more than \$200;
5. **Supplies** – Items individually worth less than \$200;
6. **Contractual** – Contractors for services or training as well as licenses;
7. **Construction** – Renovation or other construction related expenses;
8. **Other** –Other project related costs, including and especially sub-grants, that do not fit into the categories above.
9. **Indirect Costs** – These will be automatically calculated based on your entered Indirect Rate. Applicants are encouraged to use the federal De Minimis rate of 15% as part of their submission. Organizations may charge a higher indirect rate if they can provide a valid federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with a higher rate. The indirect rate of Formalized Partners and Sub-Grantees must not be higher than 15%.

When filling out the Budget Tool adding line-items covered by Cost Share is optional. Applicants should **ignore the Program Income section** as this will not be evaluated or impact the review process.

This Grant Program will **not** fund the following expenses:

- Lobbying;
- To cover any expenses made prior to the Grant Award;
- To supplant (replace) funds from other grant sources; or
- Any other cost deemed by the County unrelated to the project.

At the bottom of the Budget Tool applicants will have the opportunity to enter their Budget Narrative (8,000 characters max). The Budget Narrative should be entered as a bulleted description of each line-item entered into the Budget Tool above. The descriptions should explain why the cost, why it is necessary for the project, and how the figure was calculated. Two to three sentences per line-item is generally sufficient but applicants may exceed that amount if necessary to fully explain a line-item. Note: In past grant programs applicants have frequently received low scores on their budgets for not fully explaining why each line item was necessary for the proposed project; especially positions.

Please do not include graphics, branding, or complex text formatting as these make it difficult for reviewers to assess your application and compile final grant agreements. Simple text organization and formatting is preferred and appreciated by reviewers and OGM.

I. Goals Tool (not used)

This Grant Program is not using the Goal Tool, and it should be ignored when completing the application.

SECTION III – SCORING OF APPLICATIONS

Applicant’s proposal submissions will be evaluated using the following confidence ratings based on the below weighted criteria. Confidence ratings are another form of adjectival rating that allow evaluators to assign ratings more holistically. [Confidence ratings](#) provide evaluators the ability to look more holistically at the strongpoints and weak points of a proposal to capture raters’ overall confidence in the applicant’s likelihood to succeed, helping smaller organizations who may be stronger overall than some more seasoned larger organizations. Confidence ratings are identified by the federal government as an innovative practice that may help with reducing the lead time from solicitation to award.¹

3 – Confident	The Reviewers are confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.
2 – Somewhat Confident	The Reviewers are somewhat confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.
1 – Not confident	The Reviewers are not confident that the applicant understands the requirements, proposes a sound and relevant project, and will be successful in implementing the proposed project.

Depending on the volume of applications, number of Review Committee members, and whether they all review each application, OGM may employ a [statistical rescaling](#) of scores to put applications on a more level playing field.

Each criterion is attributed a specific weight out of a total of 100 points.

Criterion A: Organizational Capability and Partnership (15 points)

1. The applicant demonstrates robust capacity and infrastructure to fulfill administrative, fiscal, partnership and programmatic requirements to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate activities in a timely manner under the Lighthouse Grant Program.
2. The applicant demonstrates robust capacity and infrastructure to provide cultural, linguistic, technical proficiency and ability to adjust to the changing needs of diverse priority populations when implementing the project.
3. The applicant shows a strong commitment to formal collaboration (e.g., LOC) with other community organizations. Effective partnership is expected to enhance program effectiveness, expand reach to diverse priority populations, leverage additional resources, and ensure a coordinated approach to strengthen the Lighthouse Grants Program. The applicant provides a detailed plan with a timeline and outcomes outlining the implementation of capacity-building activities towards formalized partners.

¹ See [Executive Office of the President, OMB Memo for Chief Acquisition Officers, Senior Procurement Executives on reducing procurement administrative lead time using modern business practices \(January 15, 2020\)](#)

Criterion B: Alignment of Project Planning, Goals and Priorities (15 points)

1. The applicant demonstrates a clear understanding, that is supported by data and/or evidence, of the health and human service needs and barriers of diverse priority populations,
2. The applicant demonstrates a clear plan to address these needs with SMART goals and objectives. The plan aligns with the scope of the Lighthouse Grants Program that intends to provide high-quality, culturally, and linguistically responsive services to diverse priority populations.
3. The applicant demonstrates efforts towards continued quality improvement by proactively and regularly seeking input and feedback from stakeholders that reflect the diversity of priority populations and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project.

Criterion C: Program activities (45 points)

1. The applicant demonstrates the capability to develop a comprehensive intake and needs assessment system. This robust system effectively identifies the types and levels of services required, enabling the Lighthouse program to provide personalized support at the appropriate level to maximize resources.
2. The applicant demonstrates its strategies are culturally and linguistically responsive to the needs of diverse priority populations and are supported by data, evidence, or promising practices.
3. The applicant demonstrates a clear outreach and recruitment strategies to build trust and enroll individuals and families within the priority populations with a focus on ensuring diverse priority populations are served.
4. The applicant demonstrates knowledge, skills, and expertise in providing navigation and guidance to connect priority populations with local systems. When providing support to priority populations, the applicant demonstrates knowledge of community resources, skill in leveraging these resources to maximize impact, and strategies to avoid duplication of services and build synergy across community efforts
5. The applicant demonstrates knowledge, skills, expertise and quality in its strategies in providing emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization.
6. The applicant demonstrates knowledge, skills, expertise and quality in its strategies in providing intensive case management to reach integration and self-sufficiency.

Criterion D: Sound Fiscal Management and Budget (15 points)

1. The applicant demonstrates sound grant and fiscal management practices and will be able to submit financial reports and backup documentation to meet administrative and audit requirements.
2. Expenses listed in the Budget and Budget Justification are consistent with the Project Strategy, Staffing Plan, and other parts of the proposal.
3. The applicant's Budget and Budget Justification reflect reasonable and realistic costs needed to implement the proposal and achieve the stated outcomes for the priority populations.

Criterion E: Monitoring and Evaluation (10 points)

1. The applicant demonstrates in its plan a clear process to measure and evaluate its project.

2. The applicant demonstrates a robust evaluation plan with key performance indicators, metrics, and milestones that will effectively demonstrate outcomes and outputs of the project.
3. The applicant demonstrates an evaluation method and data system that are designed to collect granular data (such as race/ ethnicity, language, and country of origin) and produce meaningful information in a timely manner at HHS's request.
4. The applicant demonstrates a plan how to integrate program data into HHS databases when needed.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Those persons scoring the proposals on the Review Committee will confirm that they have no conflicts of interest.
- Neither the County Executive nor any elected official will be involved in the scoring of grants or determining winners and amounts of awards.
- Scores and award amounts are non-appealable.
- Scorers' comments and the scores themselves are deliberative and privileged and will not be released. However, applicants may request a feedback report from the Office of Grants Management summarizing the Review Committees feedback. Winners will be announced publicly, and successful grant applications and award letters may be subject to release (with redactions as allowed by law).
- County officials may decline to debrief with unsuccessful applicants why their proposal was not granted, or their funding request was not granted in full.

SECTION IV – CERTIFICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, AND ASSURANCES

The applicant shall complete and return the Certifications, Acknowledgements, and Assurances listed with the application submission provided in the Application Certification section of the application in the online grants application portal. The specific items in this section are listed below:

Montgomery County Ethics Questions

Note that individuals employed by partner agencies such as Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools, and WorkSource Montgomery do not count as Montgomery County Government employees for the purpose of this Grant Program. If you are unsure if a position applies, please contact the Office of Grants Management for clarification.

Does your organization employ current employees or contractors of the Montgomery County Government? This applies for employees that are paid by your organization but are also paid by Montgomery County Government.

Does your organization's Board of Directors include current employees or contractors of the Montgomery County Government? This applies to volunteer board of director positions.

If you answered yes to either question, please describe the employee(s) role and function as it applies to your nonprofit organization. Answering “yes” to either question does **not** exclude your organization from being eligible to apply. Instead, we would like to receive this information upfront so that we can allow adequate time for the Ethics Commission to review.

Acknowledgements Agreed to by All Applicants

- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that this grant application may not be revised or altered after submission.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that if funding is awarded, the organization will enter into a non-competitive contract or grant with the County.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that awards may not be distributed as a lump sum but may be reimbursed or provided on a fixed schedule after sufficient documentation is submitted to the administering County agency.
- ✓ Applicant acknowledges that any funds submitted for reimbursement must be spent AFTER the contract is finalized and a Notice to Proceed is secured.
- ✓ Applicant has cited in this application all individuals affiliated with the organization and this program who are employed by Montgomery County.

Assurances Agreed to by All Applicants

If the grant is awarded, the applicant assures that:

- ✓ The applicant will administer all awarded funds through this Grant Program.
- ✓ Funds received will be used solely for the documented activities within the submitted

proposal.

- ✓ The applicant has read and will conform to the program guidelines and any other conditions imposed by the County in connection with the grant.
- ✓ The applicant organization intends to comply with the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, indicating that no person will be excluded from participation or be denied the benefits of any program, activity or service on the basis of race, sex, sexual preference, color, religion, ancestry, age, national origin, or handicap. The applicant further agrees to make every attempt to ensure that the program is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Please note that applications are subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) (found at Md. Code Ann., State Gov't., §10-611 through -628 (MPIA) and the County must comply with the disclosure requirements of the MPIA when a request for documents is received.
- ✓ The applicant understands that all grantees that receive awards under this Grant Program must show proof of insurance prior to receiving the funds., when requested, must be able to show proof of all insurance coverage required by law.
- ✓ The applicant agrees that any time before final payment and three (3) years thereafter, the County may have the grantee's expenditure statements and source documentation audited.
- ✓ If there are any changes that need to be made to the grant application after submittal or if the organization ceases operations or becomes a subsidiary of another organization, you have the responsibility of notifying the appropriate County administrator.
- ✓ The filing of this application is made by the undersigned individual, officially authorized to represent the applicant organization by its governing board.
- ✓ I hereby certify that information submitted in the grant application is a true and correct statement of facts. I, as a designated legal representative of the Organization, further certify that this Organization shall abide by and be subject to all applicable Federal, State and Local laws and regulations pertaining to any subsequent grant that may be issued.