

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

FY27 Lighthouse Grant Program

Program Summary: 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 2027 (FY27) Lighthouse Grant Program from qualified organizations. The FY27 Lighthouse Grant Program expects to provide one umbrella (lead) organization a total of \$3,993,574 in county funds. **Potential applicants must note that the Montgomery County Council has not yet appropriated the funds to support this Grant Program and final funding amounts may change. The awarded applicant will have an opportunity to revise their budget and proposal to match the actual appropriated amount. If the County Council substantively changes the scope or the terms of this Grant Program through the appropriations process, a new NOFO will be issued to reflect their decisions. Applicants would then need to submit a new proposal based on the updated scope and requirements.**

The awarded organization will lead a coordinated network of community-based partners to deliver comprehensive, culturally, and linguistically responsive services that promote stabilization, integration, and long-term self-sufficiency. This includes implementing a centralized intake and needs assessment system; providing navigation to critical services such as housing, healthcare, education, immigration legal services, intensive case management, and strong outreach to diverse immigrant populations across the County. Services must also incorporate preparedness planning for families facing immigration-related disruptions, along with fraud prevention, and safeguards against notario exploitation. Applicants must demonstrate strong partnership development, coalition leadership, and capacity-building efforts, including establishing a community advisory board and supporting partner organizations to ensure coordinated, equitable, and responsive service delivery systems.

Key Program Dates:

- **Program Opens for Applications:** Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 2:00 PM
- **MS Teams Live Online Grant Program Information Sessions:**
 - Friday, April 3, 2026, from 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM; and
 - Friday, April 10, 2026, from 1:00 PM - 2:00PM
- **Submission Deadline:** **Wednesday May 13, 2026, at 11:59 PM**

Key Program Resources:

- **Program Page:** https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/15fsz8qafpcc8
- **Friday, April 3, 2026, from 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM** (a session focused on the grant partnerships and a demonstration of the online grants application platform) [View the April 3rd Session Recording](#)
- **Friday, April 10, 2026, from 1:00 PM - 2:00PM** (a session focused on the grant program details and covering grant program FAQs) [Register here for the April 10th Session](#)
- [OGM Board Race-Ethnicity Reporting Template](#)
- [Appendix X: Framework for Internal Metrics](#) (view the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan application task for details; subject to change during the grant term)

- [Sample Grantee Reporting Template](#) (subject to change during the grant term)
- [OGM's Resources for Applicants Webpage](#)

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.

Ali Hoy, Program Manager II
Office of Grants Management
(240) 773-3384
grants@montgomerycountymd.gov

For any technical questions related to the Grant Program please contact HHS using the contact information below:

Remi Aromire, Program Manager II
Lighthouse Initiative
Department of Health and Human Services
Oluremilekun.Aromire@montgomerycountymd.gov

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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 2027 (FY27) Lighthouse Grant Program from qualified organizations. The FY27 Lighthouse Grant Program expects to provide one umbrella (lead) organization a total of \$3,993,574 in county funds. **Potential applicants must note that the Montgomery County Council has not yet appropriated the funds to support this Grant Program and final funding amounts may change. The awarded applicant will have an opportunity to revise their budget and proposal to match the actual appropriated amount. If the County Council substantively changes the scope or the terms of this Grant Program through the appropriations process, a new NOFO will be issued to reflect their decisions. Applicants would then need to submit a new proposal based on the updated scope and requirements.**

The awarded organization will 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. Furthermore, residents may experience a range of needs related to their immigration status regardless of how long they have lived in the County-including difficulty accessing appropriate supports and vulnerabilities that impact their safety and well being. 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 expects to provide an award of \$3,993,574 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 should 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 July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, with a potential one time no-cost extension until October 1, 2027. 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, including those experiencing barriers to language, documentation status, mobility, or knowledge of available services.
- 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, ensuring residents receive timely follow-up and clear communication.
- c. Provide emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization, including supports that address safety, housing insecurity, workforce barriers, and other emerging needs.
- 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
- f. Establish and engage a community advisory board composed of community members and service providers to provide input on program design, implementation, and areas of emerging needs.
- g. Provide capacity-building support to partner organizations as needed, including training, technical assistance, data guidance, and organizational development to strengthen service delivery across the ecosystem.
- h. Develop and implement a robust outreach strategy to strengthen community engagement and services to diverse immigrant populations across the County, including residents with varying levels of English proficiency, literacy, mobility, and familiarity with local systems.
- i. Provide immigration legal services to include legal orientations, individual legal consultations to identify and viable legal relief options for which the client may be eligible and facilitate direct connection to a legal service providers for direct legal representation, when necessary, based on the needs of the case. Legal services should be provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner reflecting the diverse needs of the priority population and should be geographically accessible across the County. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider partnership with legal service providers for effective implementation of legal service activities.

Interested in Creating New Partnerships for this Grant Application?

The list of small, diverse community-based organizations and their contact information is being provided to support opportunities for a broad, community-driven partnership network that aligns with the priorities identified through recent Lighthouse Listening Sessions. Many of these organizations represent the cultural, linguistic, and demographic diversity of the local population and have expressed interest in potential partnership to deliver services for Lighthouse in a way that is transparent, inclusive, and culturally responsive. We encourage organizations to connect with each other as helpful.

- [View the Partnership Interest Contact List](#) (PDF; updated weekly)
- [Sign up: FY27 Lighthouse Grant Program Partnership Interest Form](#) (online form)

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. These individuals and families may encounter various vulnerabilities and intersecting systemic barriers, including limited awareness of County services, and would benefit from support with access to immigration legal services, navigation assistance, housing resources, language access, education, 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 indicate how they will engage and support individuals and families, who are part of priority populations originating from Central and South American countries, as well as African, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, and Asian diaspora communities 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.

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 partners in meeting administrative, fiscal, and programmatic expectations to ensure the services offered by this grant program are delivered 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 p scope of work and budget for the partner organization and a plan describing how these awards will be monitored for impact and financial compliance. Strong applications will include LOCs outlining how the organizations will share resources, expertise, and community connections to effectively engage and streamline service delivery to the priority populations.

Proposals should demonstrate the capacity to implement proactive stabilization, and preparedness supports designed to mitigate destabilizing events that may disrupt immigrant individuals and families. This includes structured planning activities such as guardianship planning, estate and asset preparedness guidance and support (including vehicle and property transfer planning), and documentation readiness planning in the event of detention or sudden family separation. Applicants should describe how these preparedness guidelines and supports will be integrated into navigation and intensive case management services to support family continuity, asset protection, and long-term stabilization outcomes in a culturally and linguistically manner.

Within thirty (30) days of award execution, the selected umbrella organization must submit a comprehensive Outreach Plan to HHS. The Outreach plan will outline the geographic coverage strategy across the County, targeted engagement approaches for diverse priority populations, specific outreach activities to be implemented, the language access strategy to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate engagement, and capacity to respond to surge demand or shifts in community needs. The Outreach Plan must demonstrate coordination across formalized partners and alignment with the overall goals of stabilization, integration, and self-sufficiency.

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 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, Middle Eastern, 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 HHS in a timely manner.
- **Operate a Case Management System** - The umbrella organization is responsible for ensuring compliance with HHS 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 families and family units over time;
 - d) tracks specific instances of activity, assessments, and referrals over time;
 - e) associates individuals and households with activities, assessments, and referrals; and dispositions activities and referrals.

HHS will review the codebook and schema, and HHS may request additional review with the umbrella organization to ensure compliance with HHS data reporting standards. If the schema does not satisfy HHS's data reporting standards, HHS may recommend possible changes to the umbrella organization's case management system. If those changes are not feasible, HHS may require the umbrella organization to use an HHS-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);
- ***New FY26 Requirement*** The organization must have a “Current” standing with the [Maryland Secretary of State OneStop – Charities Public Registry](#);
- 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/or be exclusively for Montgomery County residents;

- All successful applications must clearly state the following and activities and expenditures funded through this grant program must:
 - Be provided free of charge (this includes a prohibition on requesting donations and use of County resources for fundraising);
 - Not be provided in promotion of a particular religion, political party, etc. or with a requirement of service or program attendance; and
 - Be open and available to all Montgomery County residents, regardless of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, family responsibility, genetic status, presence of children, or source of income.
- Current Montgomery County contract or grant award winners must be 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. Grant funding cannot be used for any purchase which has already been made; purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Montgomery County; prior obligations of and/or fines; debts and penalties imposed on the grantee; lobbying expenses; alcoholic beverages; or supplanting (replacing) other funds.

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.
- Direct Client Assistance – Financial assistance provided to individuals and families served under the Lighthouse Grant, including but not limited to short-term rental assistance, vehicle-related expenses necessary to maintain transportation stability (e.g., repairs, registration, insurance, towing, storage), and fees related to securing required documentation such as passports, and other travel documents.
- Travel – Transportation stipends, vehicle operation, or public transportation vouchers;
- Document fees – fees required for clients to secure required documentation including, but not limited to, travel documents (such as passports or consular identification), or immigration legal document application or filing fees.
- Direct Assistance – direct assistance to individuals and families served including, but not limited to, short-term rental assistance, emergency food assistance, emergency medical expenses, etc.
- Equipment – Tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$10,000.
- Supplies – Tangible personal property other than those described in the equipment definition. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is below \$10,000, regardless of the length of its useful life.
- 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 base period is from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Awards will be eligible for renewal (pending successful performance outcomes, grant administration compliance, and future appropriation of funds) for two additional independent option year grant periods of July 1, 2027-June 30, 2028, and July 1, 2028 – June 30th, 2029. Any future funding outside of the project period is contingent on Council appropriations for the respective fiscal year. 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, 2026. For the third stage, 25% of the funds will be available after March 1, 2027. For the fourth stage, 20% of the funds will be available after June 1, 2027, and the remaining funds (5%) will be available after final programmatic and financial reports are accepted by HHS.

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.

G. Award Reporting Requirements

Award winners will be required to submit monthly activity and financial progress reports detailing achievements, progress, challenges, and lessons learned as well as spending against the award. Monthly reports should be submitted using the HHS Lighthouse Reporting Template (Appendix X) The monthly report is due the 15th of the following month.

Reporting Type	Reporting Frequency	Due Date
Program Report	Monthly	Programmatic reports are due the 15 th of the following month.
Financial Report	Monthly	Financial expenditure reports are due the 15 th of the following month.
Data Report	Monthly	Reports must be submitted within the 15 th of the following month.

Award winners are required to comply with reporting requirements and submission timelines outlined in the Lighthouse Grant Agreement. Timely submission of required programmatic, financial, and data reports is necessary to support program monitoring and fiscal reporting.

Failure to submit required reports within the established timelines may result in the follow-up from HHS to address reporting delays. Grantees may be required to implement corrective actions to resolve reporting challenges and ensure compliance with grant requirements.

Award winners will also be required to respond in a timely manner to requests for ad hoc reports from HHS. In addition, recipients will be expected to participate in monthly programmatic check-ins with the Grantor to discuss progress on the project. The Grantee will be responsible for developing and circulating a structured agenda for each monthly programmatic meeting, taking detailed meeting notes, and disseminating those notes to HHS and all relevant partners within two (2) business days following each meeting.

Monthly reports should at minimum include the identified key data points from a reporting template provided by HHS. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional data points to report the impact made by this grant program.

Prior to grant closeout, the umbrella organization will be required to implement a structured client transition plan to ensure active clients are referred to the successor Grantee(s) to maintain continuity of care in order to minimize service disruption. The transition plan must be coordinated with DHHS and documented as part of the grant closeout process.

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.

In coordination with HHS, 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 monthly 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.

H. Application Review & Awards

1. **OGM Administrative (Admin) Review** – OGM will assess all applications for Montgomery County Eligibility Conditions listed above as well as confirm that the applications submitted are complete and meet minimum standards. If minor errors are found in an application, OGM will give applicants a brief window (usually two business days) to resolve the issue. Applicants generally will not be given the opportunity to resolve any issues with Montgomery County Eligibility Conditions or major issues with their applications. Organizations and applications that do not meet these requirements will be disqualified while those that do will move on to the next stage.
2. **Proposal and Organization Eligibility Review** – HHS will also conduct a second review assessing whether applicants and their proposals address the Funding Priorities cited above to ensure all submitted applications are within the intended scope of this Grant Program. This review will include an assessment of the submitted financial documentation and budget for eligible and ineligible expenses. Organizations and applications that do not meet these requirements will be disqualified while those that do will move on to the next stage.
3. **Subject Matter Expert (SME) Review** – 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. Submission Guidelines

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.

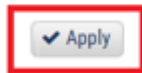
How to Apply:

1. **Log into the Euna (eCivis) Portal to create an application profile**
<https://portal.ecivis.com/#/login>
2. **While logged in, access the FY27 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”.



Montgomery County MD

FY26 Lighthouse Grant Program



3. **Review the Euna (eCivis) applicant user guides** for assistance and other support resources.

OGM Developed Instructional Videos (Youtube videos):

1. [How to Create an Euna Application](#)
2. [Euna Budget Tool Instructional Video](#)

Euna Applicant User Guides (PDF downloads):

1. [Logging into Your eCivis Portal Account](#)
2. [Reviewing and Submitting your application](#)
3. [Transfer Application Ownership](#)
4. [Guide for Applicants](#), including Budget Tool assistance on pages 13 to 20

Applications must be submitted through the Montgomery County Office of Grants Management - Grants Application Platform through the links posted on the first page of this document. Once the applicant clicks on the link, they will be prompted to create a Euna Grants account, select the Grant Program, and then will be able to access the grant application. Applicants requiring an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management (contact listed on the first page of this document) to discuss alternative submission options.

Applications are due no later than Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 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.

J. Information Session

Two Grant Program Information Sessions will be held. The dates and a link to register and 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.

K. 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 data fields will be used to 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
- Lead Organization's Federal Tax Identification Number
- Montgomery County Supplier Number, if known (optional)
- Lead Organization's confirmation of current SDAT standing
- Lead Organization's confirming of current Maryland Charities Database status
- Link to Organization website (optional)
- Upload: Most recent IRS 990 Form for Nonprofit Organizations or an explanation of why your organization is exempt from filing 990s
- Is the Lead Organization's business located in Montgomery County? If yes, what address?
- Contact Information for the organization's proposal primary point-of-contact (POC)
- Contact Information for the organization's proposal secondary point-of-contact (POC)
- Type in board chair (or equivalent position) names, organization title, email, and phone number

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>

The County is now checking the Registration Status of potential and current grantees with the Maryland Secretary of State OneStop – Charities Public Registry. A grantee with Montgomery County is required to comply with state laws and therefore, have a Registration Status of “Current” (or “Exempt”). The Office of Grants Management (OGM) will verify the status of an applicant. Although proof of a current registration is not required as a component of the application, it is critical that Lead and Support organization applicants remain registered and Current with Maryland OneStop as applicants will be disqualified from a grant competition, or even lose a grant award, and/or face delays in grant payments if they are not Current (or provide evidence of being “Exempt”).

Applicants can verify their status with the Maryland Charities Public Registry via this link: https://onestop.md.gov/list_views/62f3e1797f7e3200016a3dab

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. **FY27 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 exceed the character and/or word limits may be pushed back to applicants for revision or disqualified from consideration.

1. **Theory of Change** – Overall, how will the project establish a coordinated intake and needs assessment system that provides navigation services, emergency supports, and intensive case management services that are culturally and linguistically responsive to address the complex needs of diverse priority populations. Detail the vision for how this grant will provide relief to individuals and families experiencing urgent needs related to immigration-related hardships. Be sure to specify clearly what your proposal expects to change, and the logical pathway by which the services and activities in the proposal lead to measurable changes that would not otherwise happen. (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. Applicants have the option of uploading additional media (i.e. charts, workflows, graphics, etc.) to more clearly illustrate activities outside of a pure narrative
 - **Targeted 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 equitable access to services across diverse communities, languages, and geographic areas in Montgomery County. Applicants should describe strategies for engaging communities that may face barriers to accessing services, including culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach approaches. 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. Applicants should also be able to describe how they will establish standardized referral coordination procedures, including systems for receiving, managing, and responding to referrals from internal and external county

stakeholders. Applicants should describe strategies to manage case capacity and service demands during periods of increased need and ensure timely response to referrals. (1,500 words maximum).

- **Navigation service and guidance:** Explain what strategy will be implemented to connect priority populations to services and reduce immediate barriers to accessing public benefits, legal protections, and stabilization resources. The strategy should promote longer-term economic stability and community integration. 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:** Explain what strategy will be implemented to provide emergency support to address urgent needs from individuals and families to reach stabilization. Emergency supports should include assistance to address urgent needs related to housing, food, transportation, medical needs, and other stabilization supports. Applicants should also describe how emergency support services may assist individuals and families experiencing immigration-related crises, including preparedness planning, and assistance addressing urgent logistical needs following detention and detainment events. 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:** Explain what strategy will be implemented to provide intensive case management. For the Lighthouse Grant Program, Intensive Case Management (ICM) refers to a structured, high-touch service approach designed to support individuals and families experiencing urgent or complex needs that require sustained coordination across multiple systems. ICM extends beyond basic referral or navigation services. The project should focus on supporting stabilization for individuals and families experiencing immigration-related challenges. Services should include enhancing essential services and resources needed to address urgent needs and maintain safety and well-being. The Lighthouse Grant is designed to provide timely, coordinated relief and eradicate barriers to accessing public systems. Describe how your strategy is supported by data, evidence, or promising practices. Applicants should also describe how case management services will address complex family situations, including circumstances in which a primary caregiver may be detained. Proposals should describe protocols for assessing the safety and well-being of children and ensuring family safety planning when needed. 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:** Describe how your organization will select and work with other community-based organizations through formalized partnerships to ensure individuals and families with diverse backgrounds are able to access the services funded by the Lighthouse grant program. Please outline the roles and services each formalized partner will provide to the clients and explain the 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** – Describe 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** – Describe 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 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 12-month grant agreement period of performance. The implementation start date for a proposal should begin no earlier than July 1, 2026, to account for the grant program’s selection and awarding process. The program is expected to be fully operational by July 1, 2026.

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** – Provide an overview of the key operational components that enable the data collection, monitoring, and evaluation of the proposed scope of service. This overview must include all the following components:
 1. Staff roles and responsibilities for data collection, monitoring, and evaluation;
 2. Systems or tools currently in place at your organization to perform and manage data collection, data cleaning, analysis, and reporting;
 3. The availability of systems or tools to extract client- and household-level data, particularly longitudinal data that shows change over time, to share with HHS; and
 4. Plan to address any foreseen challenges to managing or accomplishing any of the previously listed components.
- HHS expects that client-level demographic data and household-level data as outlined in the Data Framework ([Appendix X](#)), as detailed below, will be tracked and available for reporting, analysis, and extracts. If these sorts of data are not already routinely collected, maintained, and reported as part of current processes, include a discussion of any barriers and supports needed to start. (1,200 words).

Propose and define the **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** for each of the domains specified in the bulleted list below. Each KPI must have 4 parts:

1. A criterion-referenced definition of success (i.e., success as defined by a specific set of standards or a benchmark);
2. A specific, timebound, and quantifiable target;
3. A clearly identified tool, survey, instrument, or other means to collect appropriate data; and
4. The frequency at which data that informs the KPI will be collected (e.g., at intake and every 3 months until exit).

Additionally, each domain has a specific requirement that at least one (1) KPI must address (e.g., a change in condition). Applicants are encouraged to propose multiple KPIs for each domain to demonstrate key points of the monitoring strategy.

- **Domain 1: Outreach and Engagement** — This domain concerns the effectiveness of the program's efforts to create pathways for people of a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds to enroll and participate. This includes events, interorganizational work to create referral pathways, one-on-one contacts and touchpoints with people in the community. At least one (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate client-level efforts and include tracking of preferred language and country of origin, and (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate interorganizational efforts.

- Domain 2: Program Reach — This domain concerns the program’s effectiveness at enrolling and serving the intended service populations, including intake, eligibility, needs assessment, and triage. At least one (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate client-level reach and at least one (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate household-level reach.
- Domain 3: Navigation — This domain concerns the program’s effectiveness at connecting clients internally and externally to resources and services that address their needs. This domain encompasses the full spectrum of service delivery, including referrals to other organizations, services provided internally, length of engagement, and service intensity. At least one (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate successful client-level navigation.
- Domain 4: Stabilization — This domain concerns the program’s effectiveness at mitigating crisis-level barriers to participants’ access to food, shelter, and medical attention. At least one (1) KPI must monitor and evaluate changes in client- and/or household-level condition.

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. The plan should include a description of the staffing structure to ensure adequate supervision and oversight of the work, including the staff responsible for oversight of work to be performed by any sub-grantees. 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 skill set 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 detailed 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. If you uploaded optional supporting documents, please provide a short explanation of the uploaded documents in this field (600 character maximum).

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.**

Interested in Creating New Partnerships for this Grant Application?

The list of small, diverse community-based organizations and their contact information is being provided to support opportunities for a broad, community-driven partnership network that aligns with the priorities identified through recent Lighthouse Listening Sessions. Many of these organizations represent the cultural, linguistic, and demographic diversity of the local population and have expressed interest in potential partnership to deliver services for Lighthouse in a way that is transparent, inclusive, and culturally responsive. We encourage organizations to connect with each other as helpful.

- [View the Partnership Interest Contact List](#) (PDF; updated weekly)
- [Sign up: FY27 Lighthouse Grant Program Partnership Interest Form](#) (online form)

H. Budget Tool (Data Fields)

The budget for this proposal should contain detailed itemized cost information for all proposed expenses plus indirect costs. Please also include the value of any cost-shares such as donations, other grants received, and in-kind or pro bono services that you anticipate being donated and that are related to this proposal. **The Program Budget is a pre-built form that is available in the online application.**

- Program Budgets may include indirect costs. Indirect costs cover general administrative costs such as: legal, accounting, liability insurance, audits, and the like. Indirect costs may only be charged on direct operating expenses, not capital expenses. If applicants have a federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), then they must use that rate within their application. Applicants without a NICRA may use a rate of up to 15%. Indirect costs will be listed as a flat amount and do not need to be detailed into individual line-items.
- If applying as a collaboration, please include the appropriate division of budget between the two or more organizations that are applying.

The proposal's budget should include a detailed listing of expenses and justification for each expense. Detail your budget request by clicking on the Euna Grants Budget Tool in the application platform to open a new browser tab.

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.

BUDGET SUPPORT RESOURCES: The Euna Grants [Guide for Applicants](#) includes detailed guidance on pages 13-20 on how to fill out the Budget Tool. In addition, OGM has developed a [Euna Budget Instructional Video](#) posted on YouTube to demonstrate and guide applicants through the Budget Tool functions.

Enter your budget request using the federal object class categories listed below add as many additional line-items underneath each category as required:

- Personnel – Staff salaries;
- Fringe Benefits – Health insurance and other staff benefits.
- Direct Client Assistance – Financial assistance provided to individuals and families served under the Lighthouse Grant, including but not limited to short-term rental assistance, vehicle-related expenses necessary to maintain transportation stability (e.g., repairs, registration, insurance, towing, storage), and fees related to securing required documentation such as passports, and other travel documents.
- Travel – Transportation stipends, vehicle operation, or public transportation vouchers;
- Document fees – fees required for clients to secure required documentation including, but not limited to, travel documents (such as passports or consular identification), or immigration legal document application or filing fees.
- Direct Assistance – direct assistance to individuals and families served including, but not limited to, short-term rental assistance, emergency food assistance, emergency medical expenses, etc.
- Equipment – Tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$10,000.
- Supplies – Tangible personal property other than those described in the equipment definition. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is below \$10,000, regardless of the length of its useful life.
- 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%.

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:

- 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.

At the **bottom** of the Budget Tool, applicants will have the opportunity to enter their Budget Narrative (8,000 characters max). **It is contingent upon applicants to clearly indicate in their narrative how the proposal meets the eligibility and priority criteria outlined in this NOFO.** Do not assume that each cost will be intuitive to reviewers during their evaluation and scoring of your proposal.

The Budget Narrative should be entered as a bullet description of each line item entered in the Budget Tool above. The descriptions should explain at minimum:

- A brief description of the line-item itself;
- Why the cost is necessary for the proposal;
- How it meets eligibility standards; and
- How the figure was calculated.

Three to four 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 (1-3 rating, 15/100 total 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 to carry out the tasks and activities outlined in the Scope of Work (Section C). Effective partnership is expected to enhance program effectiveness, expand reach to diverse priority populations, leverage additional resources, and ensure a coordinated approach to strengthening the Lighthouse Grants Program. Each formalized partner’s role and services are clearly defined and will support the umbrella organization to serve diverse populations. The applicant provides a detailed plan with a timeline and

outcomes outlining the implementation of capacity-building activities towards formalized partners.

Criterion B: Alignment of Project Planning, Goals and Priorities (1-3 rating, 15/100 total 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 HHS to ensure quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project.

Criterion C: Program activities (1-3 rating, 45/100 total 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 strategy to build trust and enroll individuals and families within the priority populations with a focus on ensuring diverse priority populations across the County 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 (1-3 rating, 15/100 total 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 (1-3 rating, 10/100 total 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 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.), 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, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The applicant further agrees to make every attempt to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.) and ensure that the program is accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition, the applicant intends to comply with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. Sections 6101-6107) such that no person will experience discrimination based on age in any program that receives federal financial assistance.
- ✓ 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.