

## **ARRA Strengthening Communities Fund- State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building Program**

**Due Date:** July 7, 2009

**Potential Partners:** University of Wisconsin- Parkside Center for Community Partnerships, Nonprofit Development

**Funding Amount:** \$250,000 over 24 months

### **Program Purpose and Objectives**

The goal of the Capacity Building program is to build the capacity of the Authorized Entities and of nonprofit organizations in their service area, whether secular or faith based, to maximize their social impact as they provide services to address economic recovery issues present in their communities. Both Authorized Entities and nonprofit organizations receiving assistance will be better equipped as a result of this grant program. The initiative is further designed to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to access ARRA efforts/benefits and has the following specific objectives:

- Helping organizations develop the capacity to offer additional services based on new needs that have arisen from the economic downturn and new relevant ARRA efforts/programs for which the organizations might be eligible (e.g. offering weatherization activities or green jobs training).
- Helping organizations form new partnerships to apply for ARRA funding/programs.
- Helping organizations form/strengthen partnerships to better facilitate referrals for services/benefits.

This grant program funds capacity building activities that produce measurable effects that result in more sustainable organizations. By addressing issues that are critical to the long-term viability of nonprofit organizations, these organizations are better prepared and positioned to understand and meet the needs of their communities.

The SCF Capacity Building program grants are intended to expand the capacity of nonprofit organizations to deliver social services in a secular manner. These grants cannot be used to provide direct client services. The program grant funds can pay for capacity building activities that result in improved social service programs and activities. The SCF State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building program grantees will use the funds in the following three areas:

- Conducting outreach and education aimed at increasing the involvement of nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery.
- Providing training and technical assistance aimed at building the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the broad economic recovery issues present

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- Building the capacity of their State, local or Native American/Tribal government office or designee to better involve nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery.

Program Expectations/Outcomes: Through capacity building activities in these three areas, it is expected that grantees will

1. Increase the involvement of nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery by facilitating partnerships (e.g., informal networks, coalitions, or more formal financial relationships) between and among nonprofits and other government agencies. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability and effectiveness, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those most in need.
2. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to accurately assess the most significant capacity building needs of the organizations they propose to serve.
3. Applicants must describe the process they will use to assist nonprofit organizations with the identification of organizational needs.
4. Applicants must include a detailed description of their assessment methods to be used to determine the capacity building needs of the nonprofit organizations.

### **Outreach and Education to Nonprofit Faith-based and Community Organizations**

For the purposes of this grant, awardees will provide capacity building outreach and education services to nonprofit organizations located within the political subdivision of the applicant. These services include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Providing information and education regarding access to ARRA efforts/benefits, serving as a liaison between government entities and nonprofit organizations and facilitating partnerships, and facilitating access to ARRA efforts/benefits and other funding sources.
2. Outreach can be done through face-to-face meetings, group education, use of websites, e-mail technology, mass media, and other forms of printed outreach materials. Any criteria for determining where, or with whom, to conduct outreach must be neutral to whether the organizations or leaders that benefit are faith-based or community-based organizations or leaders.
3. Grantees may not discriminate against either kinds of groups or persons when considering how they can be involved in the recovery effort.

### **Capacity Building Training and Technical Assistance to Nonprofit Organizations**

Capacity Building program grantees will provide training and technical assistance to build the organizational capacities of nonprofit organizations. Training and technical assistance activities must produce measurable results for the organizations served. Examples of the kinds of allowable capacity building activities that could be the focus of grantees' training and technical assistance to nonprofits include the following: (This list is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive.)

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1. Organizational Development
  - Strengthening Board Governance
  - Developing Systems: Management, Human Resources, Financial, Information Technology, Planning
  - Training Job/Benefits Counselors for ARRA Benefits and Other Federal Assistance
  - Developing Comprehensive Communications Strategy
2. Program Development
  - Creating Information Systems (e.g., ARRA Benefits/Programs, Financial Benefits/Tax Credits, Social Service Benefits)
  - Translating Program Information into Spanish or Other Languages
  - Developing Curriculum (e.g., job retraining, new job skills)
  - Making Program Improvements
3. Collaboration and Community Engagement
  - Disseminating Information Regarding State/Local ARRA Benefits
  - Developing Referral Systems Related to ARRA Benefits
  - Forging Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Community Colleges or Vocational Schools
  - Conducting Research on Local Sector Workforce Needs
  - Developing Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Industry-Specific Training Programs
  - Utilizing AmeriCorps\*VISTA Volunteers to Address Needs of Those Seeking Employment
  - Assessing Green Needs of Community and Skills Needed for Green Workers
4. Leadership Development
  - Specifying Board Composition and Function
  - Contributing to Staff Professional and Career Development
  - Training and Development of Volunteers
  - Developing Succession Planning
5. Evaluation of Effectiveness
  - Launching a Formal Program Evaluation
  - Developing and Incorporating New Program Measures
  - Incorporating Best Practices
  - Assessing Program Outcomes
  - Replicating Effective Program Models

### **Additional Information on Eligibility:**

**Authorized Entity:** An applicant must be a State, city, county, or Indian/Native American Tribal government office or a designated private nonprofit organization authorized by such an office. All applicants, whether a government office or a private nonprofit organization, must be authorized by the State, city, county, or Indian/Native

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American Tribal government to apply for a SCF State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building program grant through a statute, resolution, or executive order.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching: Yes**

Grantees must provide at least 20 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (Federal) share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$250,000, in ACF (Federal) funds must provide a non-Federal share of the approved total project cost of at least \$62,500, which is 20 percent of total approved project cost of \$312,500. Grantees will be held accountable for commitments of non-Federal resources even if they exceed the amount of the required match. Failure to provide the required amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds. A lack of supporting documentation at the time of application will not exclude the application from competitive review.

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

### **Building the Capacity of the Authorized Entity:**

Capacity Building program grantees will also use grant funds to build their own capacities related to the provision of outreach, training, technical assistance, and other capacity building services (e.g., facilitating partnerships) to nonprofits within their service areas. An application for this program should demonstrate the applicant's ability to identify and address its own capacity building needs and describe the approach it proposes for doing so if funded.