

**HRSA-11-023
FY 2011 National Training and Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreements (NCA)
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Below are common questions and answers for the FY 2011 National Training and Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement (NCA) funding opportunity. The FAQs are available on the NCA Technical Assistance website at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/assistance/nca>. The FAQs are organized under the following topics:

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ISSUE: General Information

1. What is the purpose of the NCA funding opportunity?

The purpose of the NCA funding opportunity is to establish national cooperative agreements with organizations to provide national training and technical assistance (T/TA) to potential and existing section 330 funded health centers. As described in section 330(l), the recipient organization is expected to use the NCA funds to provide T/TA related to supporting potential and existing health centers in the following three core function areas:

- Fiscal and program management (program requirements);
- Operational and administrative support (performance improvement); and
- Program development and analysis.

2. Who are the target audiences for T/TA?

Target audiences for the NCA T/TA funding opportunity include:

- **Health Centers Serving Special Populations:** The purpose of the Special Populations cooperative agreement is to provide specialized T/TA to health centers serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, homeless individuals, and residents of public housing. HRSA intends to select at least one applicant to provide T/TA in the following three areas:
 - Health centers serving migrant and seasonal farmworker populations;
 - Health centers serving homeless populations; and
 - Health centers serving residents of public housing.

- **Health Centers Serving Children in Schools:** The purpose of the Children in Schools cooperative agreement is to provide specialized T/TA to health centers serving children in schools.
- **Health Centers Serving Disadvantaged Populations:** The purpose of the Disadvantaged Populations cooperative agreement is to provide specialized T/TA to health centers serving disadvantaged populations (e.g., rural populations, and health centers serving minority populations (e.g., Asian American/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, African Americans, elderly)).
- **Health Centers Seeking Capital Financing:** The purpose of the Capital Financing cooperative agreement is to provide health centers with specialized T/TA regarding the development and financing of capital projects.
- **Health Centers Serving Underserved Communities and Vulnerable Populations:** The purpose of the Underserved Communities and Vulnerable Population cooperative agreement is to provide T/TA to potential and all existing section 330 funded health centers.

3. Does the NCA support T/TA activities for only section 330-funded health centers or a broader array of HRSA grantees?

The T/TA services supported with these funds must be available and accessible to all section 330-funded health centers within the State/region, regardless of membership status. This does not include other HRSA supported programs such as Ryan White, Title V, etc. For program development T/TA (i.e., unmet primary health care needs), such services must also be available to all potential section 330 health center applicants, including Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Look-Alikes.

4. Can an organization apply for multiple target audiences?

Yes. Eligible applicants may submit more than one application per organization in FY 2011 for NCA funding. Applicants must submit a separate NCA application for each targeted audience for T/TA. There is no limit on the number of targeted audiences for T/TA an applicant can propose to support.

5. Is there a Funding Priority for NCAs in FY 2011?

No, there are no funding priorities for NCAs in FY 2011.

ISSUE: Award Information UPDATED!

6. NEW Does HRSA still intend to compete the NCA funding opportunity announcement (HRSA-11-023) in fiscal year (FY) 2011?

Yes, HRSA still intends to compete the NCA funding opportunity announcement in FY2011. All applicants should submit their grant application(s) by the due dates specified in the FOA.

7. NEW Given the final FY2011 appropriated budget, how should NCA applicants request funding for their target audience(s)?

Applicants should request funding that is based on the approximate award levels for each target audience as outlined in the FOA. Any changes that are required due to final budget decisions will be addressed during the pre- award phase.

8. When will funds for NCAs be awarded?

The awards for NCAs will be issued on or around September 1, 2011.

9. How many section 330(l) cooperative agreements does HRSA intend to award?

Subject to the availability of appropriated funds, HRSA anticipates awarding approximately \$15 million in Federal fiscal year (FY) 2011 to establish approximately 11 NCAs to provide T/TA to potential and existing health centers in support of the Health Center Program.

10. What is the cap for Federal funds that can be requested?

The annual cap in section 330 grant support for NCAs will depend on the identified target audience who will receive the T/TA. The approximate award levels for each target audience are identified in the chart below.

Target Audience	# of Award(s)	Approximate Total Funding Amount
Health Centers Serving Special Populations	7	\$ 6 million
Health Centers Serving Children in Schools	1	\$ 500,000
Health Centers Serving Disadvantaged Populations	1	\$ 350,000
Health Centers Seeking Capital Financing	1	\$ 1 million
Health Centers Serving Underserved Communities and Vulnerable Populations	1	\$ 7.5 million

11. What is the length of the project period?

Subject to the availability of appropriated funds, the project period will be up to three years. Funding beyond the first year is dependent on the availability of appropriated funds for T/TA in subsequent fiscal years, satisfactory performance, and a decision that funding is in the best interest of the Federal government.

ISSUE: Eligibility UPDATED!

12. NEW Are Community Development Entity (CDE) organizations eligible to apply for NCA funding?

Yes, CDE organizations are eligible to apply for NCA funding as long as the organization does not plan to function as a CDE for any new transactions that provide New Market Tax Credit program financing to Section 330 funded health centers.

13. Who can apply for NCA funding (HRSA-11-023)?

Eligible applicants are public, non-profit, and for-profit entities that can provide T/TA on a national basis to community-based organizations, including tribal and faith-based organizations. Interested applicants must currently work with potential or existing health centers or other community-based providers with similar missions.

14. Can you clarify “other community-based providers with similar missions?”

Such providers may include rural health clinics, free clinics, or any organizations that provide care to individuals who lack access to primary health care services. These providers do not have to be federally funded.

15. Is an organization eligible to apply for the FY 2011 NCA if the organization was not previously awarded funding under section 330(l) from HRSA?

Yes. HRSA-11-023 is a New Competing/Competing Continuation funding opportunity. Applications may be submitted from new organizations that are not currently receiving funding under section 330(l) as well as organizations that are currently receiving funding under section 330(l). Interested applicants must currently work with potential or existing health centers or other community-based providers with similar missions.

ISSUE: Funding Restrictions

16. Are there activities that are ineligible for NCA funding?

Yes. NCA funding may not be used for the following activities:

- Construction/renovation of facilities;
- Reserve requirements for state insurance licensure; or
- Support for lobbying/advocacy efforts.

17. Please define advocacy efforts.

Advocacy is defined as using Federal section 330 funding to actively support or plead to local, State, and/or Federal congressional representative for support of a cause on behalf of another entity/organization. For additional information on the funding restrictions, please contact Brian Feldman, Senior Grants Management Specialist (GMS), at 301-443-3190 or bfeldman@hrsa.gov.

ISSUE: Application Development **UPDATED!**

18. **NEW Are the Project Work Plan and Performance Measures Forms counted toward the 80-page limit?**

No. The Project Work Plan and Performance Measures Forms are program specific forms, therefore, will not be counted toward the 80-page limit. Please refer to the summary tables on pages 8-10 of the FOA for more information on page limit requirements.

19. Does an applicant organization need to submit letters of support for the NCA application?

Yes. In the “Collaboration” section of the Program Narrative, applicants are required to provide evidence of proposed collaborations by providing letters of support, commitment, and/or investment that reference the specific collaboration and/or coordinated activities in support of the project’s operation and provision of T/TA services. If the letters of support are not available, the applicant must submit an explanation for why the letters could not be obtained.

20. Is there a page limit for the NCA application?

Yes. There is an 80-page limit (approximately 10 MB) on the length of the total application when printed by HRSA. Please refer to the summary tables on pages 8-10 of the FOA for more information on what is counted in the page limit and what is not counted in the page limit.

21. Does HRSA have guidelines (e.g., font type, font size) for the Program Narrative of the NCA application?

Yes. Please refer to HRSA's *Electronic Submission User Guide*, available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/userguide.pdf>, for detailed application and submission instructions. Pay particular attention to Sections 2 and 5 that provide detailed information on the competitive application and submission process.

22. Is there an established format and page limit for the Project Work Plan and Performance Measure Forms?

In an effort to reduce applicant burden and provide more structure for the project work plan and performance measures, HRSA has turned these two documents into required program specific forms. For FY 2011 NCA funding, applicants will no longer have to upload these documents with their application but will enter the information directly into HRSA's Electronic Handbooks (EHB). Both program specific forms (Project Work Plan and Performance Measures) must be completed in the EHB system and do not count against the page limit.

ISSUE: Budget UPDATED!

23. NEW If an organization has an approved indirect cost rate, is the organization required to use the 8% as stated on page 14 of the FOA?

No, applicants are not required to use the 8% as stated on page 14 and may use their own approved indirect cost rate. For more information on indirect cost rates, please visit <http://rates.psc.gov/>.

24. If I have specific questions on preparing my application budget, who should I contact?

NCA applicants with questions concerning the business, administrative, or fiscal issues related to the Health Center Planning Grant application may contact Brian Feldman at bfeldman@hrsa.gov or 301-443-3190.

25. Please provide instructions on what you want for the budget justification.

A detailed budget justification in line-item format must be completed for each 12-month period of the 3-year project period. **The budget justification must clearly describe each cost element and explain how each cost contributes to meeting the project's goals.** The budget justification MUST be concise, and is not intended to expand the program narrative.

26. Should the budget presentation include non-Federal funding (i.e., other program funding to represent the cumulative total funding used for T/TA activities)?

No. Budget requests should only identify Federal section 330 funding. Do not identify other program income in the Standard Form 424A, detailed line-item budget, or budget justification. Applicants can provide information on other program income and resources in the Impact section of the program narrative.

27. If the organization does not have a Federal indirect cost rate, is HRSA requiring that we request one?

No. Applicants are only required to have an indirect cost rate agreement if they are budgeting for indirect costs. Applicants must include a copy of the indirect cost agreement in the application in Attachment 4, if a copy of the agreement is not in their grant file.

ISSUE: Project Work Plan Form

28. Will the Project Work Plan be uploaded into EHB for the NCA application?

No. Applicants will not upload the document with their application, but will complete the Project Work Plan Form online directly into EHB. Please refer to Appendix B of the FOA for instructions on how to complete the Project Work Plan Form and Appendix E for a sample.

29. Are there a minimum or maximum number of goals that can be proposed in the work plan?

Yes. At minimum, applicants must address all the required NCA T/TA activities by target audience (see Appendix D of the FOA). The EHB system will pre-populate the required goals in the form. The minimum number of required goals under each core function area will vary based on the target audience. Applicants may propose up to five additional goals. Please refer to Appendix B of the FOA for instructions on how to complete the Project Work Plan Form and Appendix E of the FOA for a sample.

30. Are there any required objectives that applicants must respond to for the work plan?

No. In the Project Work Plan, applicants must outline individualized objectives related each of the required/additional goal. Please refer to Appendix B of the FOA for instructions on how to complete the Project Work Plan Form and Appendix E of the FOA for a sample.

31. Are there a maximum number of objectives and action steps that can be proposed for each goal?

Yes. Applicants may propose up to 10 objectives for each required and additional goal. There is no established limit for the number of action steps that may be proposed for each goal. Please refer to Appendix B of the FOA for instructions on how to complete the Project Work Plan Form and Appendix E of the FOA for a sample.

32. Should the work plan cover all three years of the project period (i.e., one work plan), or each year of the budget period (i.e., three work plans)?

The work plan should address the activities to be covered over the three year project period (i.e., one work plan). Organizations selected for funding will report on the progress of work plan activities during each non competing continuation application. Please refer to Appendix B of the FOA for instructions on how to complete the Project Work Plan Form and Appendix E of the FOA for a sample.

33. Should the work plan tie back to the needs addressed in the program narrative?

Yes. The T/TA activities proposed in the work plan should align with the Need, Response, and Evaluative Measures/Impact sections in the program narrative. Instructions for preparing the project work plan are in Appendix B of the FOA.

34. What is the difference between a goal, objective, and activities?

Information on the development of goals, objectives, and activities are provided in Appendix B of HRSA-11-023. In general, the project goals should describe what the project will accomplish, who will be affected, and what changes it expects to produce. Project goals are broad statements that provide overall direction of the project. An objective is a specific and measurable condition that must be attained to accomplish a particular goal. Key activities describe what is planned to bring achieve the intended objectives for the project.

ISSUE: Performance Measures Form UPDATED!

35. NEW Where can I obtain information regarding NCA performance scores?

For information regarding NCA performance scores, applicants should contact the Office of Training and Technical Assistance Coordination at 301-443-9820.

36. NEW On the Performance Measures Form, can you clarify why “national grantee satisfaction” is listed as a “core function?”

The three core functions for the NCA are Performance Requirements, Performance Improvement, and Program Development/Analysis. When completing the Performance Measures Form, applicants are required to address each core function. “National Grantee Satisfaction” is not a core function but a required performance measure that will need to be addressed by each applicant. At minimum, applicants are required to develop at least four performance measures (one for grantee satisfaction, one for program requirements, one for performance improvement, and one for program development/analysis. In the EHB, applicants will need to type in their performance measures for core functions and national grantee satisfaction in the “Performance Measure Description” field.

37. Where can I find more information on the Performance Measures Form for the NCA funding opportunity announcement (FOA)?

Please refer to Appendix C of the FOA for the instructions on how to complete the Performance Measures Form and Appendix F of the FOA for a sample. Applicants will need to complete the Performance Measures Form online in EHB.

38. Who surveys the health centers regarding satisfaction? The NCA, BPHC, or both?

BPHC surveys section 330 funded health centers annually, and the results for overall satisfaction with NCA T/TA resources will be made available to funded NCAs. NCAs may conduct other evaluation studies as appropriate for particular trainings, technical assistance, etc.

39. What is the focus of the required national performance measures?

- **Performance Measure 1:** Overall T/TA Grantee Satisfaction
- **Performance Measure 2:** Helpfulness of NCA T/TA services in assisting Health Centers to successfully meet Health Center Program requirements.
- **Performance Measure 3:** Helpfulness of NCA T/TA services in enhancing the performance and operations of Health Centers.
- **Performance Measure 4:** Helpfulness of NCA T/TA services in supporting the Program Development/Analysis of Health Centers.

40. In addition to the four required national performance measures, can organizations include other measures?

Applicants are encouraged to add other unique T/TA performance measures from their Need section of the Program Narrative to the Performance Measures Form. This may include the applicant's capacity to continually assess the T/TA needs of health centers and unmet needs for primary care, as well as an analysis of the health policy and marketplace conditions in the Nation.

41. How should applicants develop their baseline and goals for the performance measures?

Instructions on developing baseline and goals for the performance measures are available in Appendix C of the FOA. Performance measures 2, 3, and 4 are linked to each core function area. Performance measure one (1) will gauge the grantees' overall satisfaction with the T/TA. Scores for performance measures are on a 1-10 scale. Applicants are expected to define the numerator and denominator that will be used to determine the level of progress/improvement achieved on each goal.

Organizations currently receiving funding under section 330(l) should use their most recent performance scores from HRSA's national grantee satisfaction survey as their baseline for performance measures 1, 2, and 3 but will need to develop their own baseline for performance measure 4. New organizations, in the absence of performance scores, should develop their own baseline for all four performance measures. In developing the baseline, all organizations should use past performance/accomplishments and the lessons learned over the past two to three years to demonstrate how they will evaluate the NCA T/TA activities.

ISSUE: Attachments

42. How should attachments be formatted?

All attachments should be provided to HRSA in a computer-readable format (i.e., do not upload text as images). To the extent possible, HRSA recommends PDF files but will accept Microsoft Word or Excel files. Please do not use spaces or special characters when naming files. Applicants should avoid Excel documents with multiple spreadsheets as individual worksheets may not print out in its entirety. Be sure to upload the attachments in the order indicated in the funding opportunity announcement.

43. Can applicants upload additional attachments?

Applicants may upload additional relevant material in Attachment 4 of the NCA application. Please note that all attachments are included in the 80 page limit.

44. Is there a specific order required for the assembly of the application?

Yes. Applications must follow the format and order described in the tables on pages 8-10 of HRSA-11-023.

45. Question 18 on the SF-424 Form asks if the applicant has submitted forms SF 424A and SF-424 B. The forms have not been submitted to HRSA yet. Should I check "yes" or "no" for this question?

Please check "yes." The forms will later be submitted in the HRSA EHB system.

46. In the Support Requested section of the program narrative, are applicants required to identify the specific number of T/TA activities (i.e., numerical value) or discuss how the budget is appropriate for the type of T/TA activities?

Applicants do not need to identify the specific number of proposed T/TA activities in the Support Requested section. This section should address how the budget request is appropriate for the proposed T/TA activities and resources required to complete the project.

47. In the Budget Justification, Position Description, and Biographical Sketch attachments, who in the organization is considered “key personnel”?

Key personnel includes any individual who will be directly involved in the activities proposed under the cooperative agreement. Key personnel may include the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Project Director, and Quality Improvement Coordinator, among others as determined by the applicant.

48. What is the difference between the Staffing Plan, Position Description, and Biographical Sketch?

The staffing plan is separate from the biographical sketch and job description. The staffing plan is a presentation and justification of all staff required to execute the project, education and experience qualifications, and a rationale for the amount of time being requested for each position. The biographical sketch and job description attachments are specific for each of the key personnel of the project.

ISSUE: Application Submission

49. Where can I get NCA funding opportunity announcement (FOA) (HRSA-11-023)?

The NCA FOA and technical assistance materials are available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/assistance/nca>. You can also visit <http://www.grants.gov> for the FOA. Below are directions for accessing the application in Grants.Gov:

- Go to <http://www.grants.gov>.
- Step 1: Under the ‘Quick Links’ header on the right, select the ‘Grant Search’ link.
- Step 2: Under the ‘Search by Funding Opportunity Number’ field, enter HRSA-11-023
- Step 3: Click on the ‘Application’ at the top of webpage.
- Step 4: Click on the ‘download’ link.
- Step 5: Click on Download Application Package.

50. How do I submit my application and when is it due?

HRSA has implemented a two phase application submission process for the FY 2011 NCA funding opportunity. Please refer to the summary tables in Section IV (Application and Submission Information of the FOA).

Phase 1 of the NCA application must be successfully completed (including receipt of a validation email) in Grants.gov by 8:00 p.m., ET on April 25, 2011.

Phase 2 of the NCA application must be successfully completed in HRSA’s EHB by 5:00 p.m., ET on May 23, 2011.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the Grants.gov Applicant Resources webpage for access to FAQs, registration user guides, and application submission user guides. The Applicant Resources webpage is available at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp>.

51. When can applicants begin completing the HRSA EHB submission process?

Applicants can begin Phase 2 in HRSA's EHBs only after Phase 1 in Grants.gov has been successfully completed by the Grants.gov due date and HRSA has issued an email confirmation to the Authorized Official with the applicant's assigned application tracking number. The Authorized Official(s) registered in Grants.gov be notified by email when the application is ready within HRSA's EHBs for Phase 2. Each NCA applicant will receive an email notification through the HRSA Electronic Handbooks (EHBs) that provides a link to the NCA electronic submission.

52. How will applicants be notified if their application was not successfully submitted in Grants.gov and/or HRSA's EHB?

Applicants should monitor their e-mail accounts, including spam folders, for e-mail notifications and/or error messages from Grants.gov and EHB to ensure that there are not submission or validation errors.

ISSUE: Technical Assistance and Contact Information

53. If I encounter technical difficulties when trying to submit my application electronically in Grants.gov or HRSA's EHB, who should I contact?

For Grants.gov technical assistance, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov> or call the Grants.gov Contact Center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (excluding Federal holidays) at 1-800-518-4726. Please register on Grants.gov as early as possible as registration may take up to a month.

Please contact the BPHC Help Desk for technical assistance on submitting an application in the HRSA EHBs. The BPHC Help Desk can be reached at 1-877-974-2742. Applicants may also refer to the HRSA Electronic Submission User Guide available at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/userguide.htm>.

54. Who should I contact with programmatic questions concerning the NCA application requirements and process?

If you have questions regarding the FY 2011 NCA application and/or the review process described in the FOA, please contact Denise Nguyen in the Bureau of Primary Health Care's (BPHC) Office of Policy and Program Development at BPHCNCA@hrsa.gov or 301-594-4300.

The BPHC will announce a pre-applicant teleconference conference call shortly after the FOA release date. Please visit <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/assistance/nca> for the call date and additional resources.