**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Senior Community Service Employment Program 2020 Funding Opportunity Announcement**

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*Transcript by*

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LAURA CASERTANO: With that I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar. I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Steve Rietzke. He's a division chief for the Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Steve, take it away.

STEVE RIETZKE: Great. Thank you, Laura. Thank you all for being with us this afternoon or this morning if you're on the west coast. Welcome, everyone. Happy Friday. We're glad to have so many of you with us today. Thank you for your interest in the Senior Community Service Employment Program funding opportunity announcement that we have open right now.

I have the pleasure of kicking off today's session. We have a few folks on the line with us to help walk through some content.

I did just want to say upfront, kind of reiterate what Laura just said about the fact that we're not able to take questions live on the air. This is for a couple of reasons, really. Number one is just that we really try to maintain consistency and sort of a single point-of-contact process for answering questions related to funding announcements. And so the point of contact for sending questions in in written form is listed in the FOA itself and we'll reiterate that on a slide later in the presentation.

And number two, just good to have all the questions and answers in writing, given that this is a competition. And we try to control the information flow pretty quickly. So thank you all for bearing with us on that.

Certainly you may have questions that come up in the course of this presentation and definitely write those down and send them in to Jeannette Flowers, the point of contact for this FOA. And we'll put her contact info up later in the presentation.

Really what we're trying to do today is just really give you an overview of what's in the funding announcement, some of the key components, some key reminders about dates and content and so on. So we hope this is helpful in terms of highlighting some of the key features of the FOA for you. And thank you again for joining us.

And I would also just say at the top, by way of introduction, that I do want to say I hope that you all are staying safe and healthy. And just recognize that we're all in kind of a crazy period right now. We'll highlight a couple features of the FOA that we've tweaked a little bit in response to the pandemic, particularly in terms of the mode of submission and getting things signed and things like that. Obviously, electronic means is the way that we're going, and don't expect folks to run all over town and collect signatures in person and things like that. So we'll touch on that in a little bit, but wanted to preview that a little bit.

I see some comments in the chat that folks are having trouble with the audio. Laura, I'm assuming that most folks can hear me, but do chime in if there seems to be an issue on my end.

Just moving to the next slide, I wanted to introduce a couple of our speakers today. LaMia Chapman is the unit chief for the Older Workers Unit in my division at the Employment and Training Administration. And Marakinesh Kassaye, she goes by Maki (ph), she's a fairly new member of our SCSEP team, only been on the job for a few weeks. So we're glad to have Maki jumping in and helping present some of the content today.

In addition, we didn't actually get his picture on the slide, but we've also got Bennett Pudlin with us. He's a member of our SCSEP support team and he's going to help us walk through some screenshots from the SCSEP Apply website where applicants go to enter their bids. So you'll meet all these folks in just a little bit.

And before we really get started, I wanted to just throw out a polling question to see – just to get a sense of where you sit in the SCSEP realm. Are you a current SCSEP grantee? Have you been a SCSEP grantee before? Or are you a new applicant considering whether you want to apply for this particular announcement? I'll give everybody a couple minutes to weigh in here.

Looks like we've got a decent crowd of both new folks and returning folks. (Pause.) Give you just another minute or two to answer your answers to this poll. Looks like a couple folks who have been SCSEP grantees in the past. A good mix of old and new. Maybe about 10 more seconds. (Pause.)

All right. Well, thank you, folks, for filling that out. Looks like we've got a good mix of folks on the line. So welcome again.

I'm going to turn it over to LaMia Chapman to go over our objectives in a little bit more detail. LaMia?

LAMIA CHAPMAN: Thank you, Steve. Thanks, Steve. So in today's objectives slide, we're going to cover the following topics: program purpose, award information, eligibility information, application and submission information, award administration information, and agency contacts. All righty.

MR. RIETZKE: Great. Well, I'm going to – let me walk through the program purpose and then we'll start to get into some more of the detail. So I think many of you probably know some of this already.

But SCSEP is authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act. And obviously it's a federally-sponsored employment and training program targeted at low-income individuals 55 years and older who have poor employment prospects and barriers to employment.

So I think most of you probably know this already. SCSEP is somewhat unique in the sense that – among workforce programs in the sense that a lot of the resources really go toward supporting participants in community service assignments, where they get work experience, on-the-job learning, combined with training, in a way that ultimately prepares them for unsubsidized employment, whether that's in the public sector or in the private sector.

And so SCSEP has sort of dual goals in the sense that we're trying to drive people toward unsubsidized employment after they exit the program. But while they're in the program, it's really driving them to foster self-sufficiency. Through that community service assignment, they're earning a wage. They're able to support themselves as they go through the training.

And I think it also has a positive impact on the communities where SCSEP programs play out, because the participants in the program are really able to contribute to their communities through their assignment at various host agencies in the area. So a lot of good things happen through SCSEP and it's – we really view it as a critical support for low-income older Americans.

You'll notice in the introductory sections of our FOA that we're focusing on that unsubsidized employment goal. And I think while we're recognizing that SCSEP participants have a broad range of skill sets, interests, and barriers to employment – and probably have varying levels of readiness for unsubsidized employment – we've got some language in that introduction and kind of woven throughout this FOA to try and focus in on that unsubsidized employment goal.

And so you'll notice that we're really encouraging applicants to propose strategies that provide practical short-term training opportunities for the kind of occupations that are in demand, utilize on-the-job experience or skill-specific training in those strategies, and really as a way to help prepare more SCSEP participants for transition into unsubsidized employment.

So that's kind of a key policy focus area of this FOA that I wanted to point out.

And now I'm going to kick it back over to LaMia to talk a little bit more about the type of award and the grant amount and things like that. So LaMia?

MS. CHAPMAN: Thanks, Steve. So for the award information and award type and amount, the funding opportunity number you have and are responding to – will respond to – should be the FOA-ETA number 20-09 for the Senior Community Service Employment Program National Grants for program year 2020.

The funding will be provided in a grant renewable annually for a total of up to four years, depending upon – subject to the availability to funds. We expect the availability of approximately $312 million to fund approximately 10 to 12 grants.

For these grants, this includes 10 to 12 grants for – including statutory set-asides and at least one award to Indian/Native American organization, and at least one award to Asian/Pacific Islander organization. For these statutory set-asides, they will be referred to as "set-aside" applicants. And applicants for the national grant funding will be referred to as "general" applicants. So when you're in the (FOA ?) when you're responding, just make sure you indicate that on the – in your response.

Next. The award type and amount for the general applicants. The maximum funding amount, as mentioned on pages 3 through 6, is $50 million – up to $50 million, and must apply to provide services in more than one state. And then we have the minimum request amount indicated. Applicants are encouraged to apply for at least 20 to 25 percent of the state's allocation, for a maximum operational efficiency. But grantees will not be penalized for failing to do so. I'll hand it back off to you, Steve.

MR. RIETZKE: Great. Thanks, LaMia. And I do – I see a comment in our behind-the-scenes chat just to do a quick correction. The FOA talks about funding approximately 10 to 22 grants rather than 10 to 12. And obviously, that'll vary based on the size of the awards. So thanks, folks, for the clarification tip. And thank you, LaMia.

So on slide 12, we wanted to highlight some additional requirements in terms of the way that the bidding works. Now, SCSEP is also somewhat unique among workforce programs in the sense that there are specific, what we call, authorized positions or (SWAPs ?), that are assigned to particular counties. And so when Bennett walks through the SCSEP Apply application slides in just a little bit, you'll get to see how the mechanics of this work in a little bit more detail.

But first we wanted to highlight some of the bidding requirements that are specific to the general applicants. And in the FOA you can find these – I think they start around the bottom of page 4 and flow onto page 5. It's FOA section II.A.1.c, as you can see on the slide.

But basically, what those requirements say is that for general applicants there's sort of four different rules that we want to highlight. One is that you have to apply for all the authorized positions in a particular county. So we wouldn't want you to just sort of apply for half the positions in a county or something like that. You may request positions in multiple counties in a state, but those counties need to be contiguous. In other words, they need to be next to each other geographically.

You can apply for more than one group of contiguous counties in a state, but each of those groups needs to meet the minimum state funding requirements. So if you were to apply for a group of counties on the west side of the state and a group of counties on the east side of the state, each one of those groups would need to independently meet that minimum state funding requirement.

And then you must list your request for locations and number of positions by county and state through the online application at www.scsepapply.org. And that's what Bennett's going to walk through some screenshots of how you actually do that on the web application in just a bit.

We also want to point out national grant funds are not allocated for states of Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, and for the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

And finally, this isn't on the slide but I wanted to point out that once we get all these bids, it's good to know that you may not get exactly the territory that you bid on if you win the application. And that's because there are a number of rules that we need to follow in terms of the way that the money is allocated. We have an equitable distribution requirement that sort of spans across counties.

And frankly, it's also just possible that you may submit a bid for a particular county that another winning applicant submits on the same county. And then we have to do some decision making on the back end in order to make all the geography work.

So just a heads-up that – and the FOA mentions this as well. I think the language used there is a little more legalistic sounding, right? It says the department reserves the right to not award exactly what you bid on. I'm paraphrasing a bit. But you'll notice that in the FOA.

So that's what we wanted to cover on that slide. I'm going to turn it back to LaMia for just a bit and then she's going to turn it over to Bennett to walk you through SCSEP Apply.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thanks, Steve. So just to follow-up for the – behind what Steve said, that for the set-aside there are no minimum funding requests required by the state or county. Set-aside applicants may indicate the number of positions they are proposing to serve in each county without being – have to be contiguous.

So you can take it from here, Bennett.

BENNETT PUDLIN: Thank you, LaMia. And good afternoon, everyone. As you've heard, applicants under this FOA must list their requested locations and number of positions by county and state through SCSEP Apply. And you have the web address there.

What you're seeing on the screen now is the home page. That page is open to anyone who navigates to the URL. But in order to go further than that, you have to register. Once you have registered, then you'll be able to see the instructions page, which has a comprehensive overview of the application – the online application, that is – and all of the bidding requirements that Steve has just summarized.

Each page of the online application has a "contact us" button on bottom right and that will get you technical assistance. It also contains a reminder that for any questions related to the FOA itself you need to contact the department's point of contact, Jeannette Flowers; it gives her email address.

On the right side of this page, with a red border, you can see a listing of videos. These were produced for the 2016 national competition. And although the data displayed in those videos is clearly out of date, the functionality of the online application is unchanged and it will provide you a very useful demonstration that will get you through this 2020 – PY 2020 competition.

Below the videos on the right-hand side there's a list of documents that you can download. You can download first all the positions by county that are available through this competition. And you can also see a link there that will bring you to a page that will enable you to visualize the county boundaries for each of the states. Anyone can access both the videos and these documents without registering.

In order to register, you'll have to click on the link that says "register" – unfortunately not visible to you, I don't believe, at this moment, but a little further down on this page. And reminder that you can only register one user per organization. The choice of that user is yours, but we cannot have multiple users for the same organization using this application because it could create confusion about which is the real bid. And you certainly don't want that to happen.

Every time you enter this site you'll have to enter your user name and password, and then that'll allow you access to all the features. Next slide, please.

Once you've registered, the instructions page becomes visible. And as I said, that'll give you a lot of additional information. As you can see on this next slide on the main menu, after instructions there's a menu item called "dashboard." You use that to access the bidding pages and you'll have a variety of options, depending on what you're bidding for and what your status is.

The slide you're seeing now is giving you the "all applicants" view for general grants, not set-aside grants. We have different views for set-aside applicants, current grantees, and new applicants. The "all applicants" view will work for anyone. And the bidding rules that we've talked about are enforced by the application. The minimum bid in a state, the requirement to bid on a whole county, with the exception of certain large counties where you can bid a smaller amount, making sure that your counties are contiguous and so forth, all of that is enforced in this application for you.

This screenshot and the next one are designed to show you how the process works. When you select a state to bid in – and you can do that through your dashboard, or in the upper right corner you can navigate to any other state that you wish – the tool will show you a list of each county in the state. In the "all applicants" view there are three columns to the left for PY 2019. These are informational only.

If you were to go to the "current grantee" view, there would be two additional columns on the left, one for the grantees own authorized positions in PY19 in each county, and the other for the grantee's own enrollments in each county as of April 1st of 2020.

The last two columns on both views show first the available positions under this competition for each county in PY 2020, and then the column where you enter your bid. When you first enter a bid for a county – and in this case, the bid that was entered was in Pima County, Arizona – it – that county and each of the contiguous counties will be highlighted in red.

They'll remain highlighted in red until you meet the minimum contiguous county cluster size for the state by clicking on additional red counties, except in the 19 large counties which are listed in the instructions. You must bid for all the positions in a county. So when you click on a cell, it will be automatically populated with all available positions. And if you look at the cell for Pima, you'll see that's where the initial bid was made and the bid is 61 positions, which is the same as the number of available positions in the column to the left.

Once you've met the minimum contiguous county cluster size, that cluster that you bid on will turn green. And the screenshot shows that. The counties you bid on are green, as well as all of the contiguous counties for your cluster. That way, you can continue bidding on these green cells and expand your cluster beyond the minimum required. Or you can start a second cluster of contiguous counties in the state. That second cluster will be red as you start off, just like in the previous screen; will turn green when you reach the minimum.

There are five large states where the minimum under the FOA rules exceeds 165. Again, you'll see the details of that on the instructions page.

Once you have completed a cluster, you can save it as a tentative bid. There are buttons on the top left and bottom left for saving the tentative bid. You can return to your tentative bids at any time to adjust them until you submit your final bid.

Again, the program has been – the online program has been designed to recognize and enforce all the bidding rules in the FOA. You'll not be able to submit a final bid that does not comply with the requirements.

Next slide, please.

To help in visualizing the territory in a state that you might be interested on, you can click on the map function. And that opens in a separate tab. This interactive map shows you nationwide, state, and county views. On the screenshot you're seeing now, the nationwide view focused on Arizona.

When you put your cursor over any state or county, a yellow box comes up that lists the number of national grantee available positions in the state or county, as well as state authorized positions and current enrollments for both state and national grantees, again giving you context for a potential bid.

If you click on the state, it will bring you a view of all the counties in the state. There are sized icons and you can see those in the right – the legend to the right at the top – that will tell you the relative number of state or national grantee positions in the county, as well as any state or national grantee enrollments in the county. That's in addition to this yellow pop-up you get if you put your probe over the county.

If you click on the county, you'll drill down to an enlarged view of that county and the immediately-surrounding contiguous counties. It may be helpful to you to open this map in a separate browser when you're bidding so you can have both it and the bidding tables open at the same time.

Next slide, please.

When you have finished the bidding and are comfortable with your tentative bids, you can then access this page for submitting your final bids, again through your dashboard. There is a link there that says "go to submit final bids to DOL" and it brings you to this page. When you click on the box in red here, your last tentative bid will become your final bid and will be transmitted to DOL. At that time you lose all access to the features of SCSEP Apply. So you don't want to hit that button prematurely.

As you can see on this screen, SCSEP Apply will be available until the closing date and time, which is 4:00 p.m. on Monday, June 15th, 2020. I think it's a Monday. Goodness, don't hold me to that. But June 15th, in any event. But the FOA and we strongly encourage you to submit your bid as early as possible, at least a couple of days early, since you'll need to have your bid submitted to DOL when you are submitting your completed application.

And you want to submit early enough so that if there are any technical issues, there is time to resolve them, either on your end or ours. The FOA clearly states that technical problems, even if they're not yours, will not excuse a late final bid.

So that completes the overview of SCSEP Apply. And again, the closing date and time, 4:00 p.m. on June 15th. The application will be taken down at precisely 4:00.

And at this point I think it's going back to Maki. But if not, to Steve. Thank you.

MR. RIETZKE: Right. And I'll just jump in for one second, Maki. Thank you, Bennett. And I did want to just say I looked it up on the calendar. June 15th is a Monday. So again, the due date, June 15th, 2020, which is a Monday; and 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

And sorry, Maki, for the interruption. I'll turn it over to you to talk about the period of performance and some information on eligibility.

MARAKINESH KASSAYE: Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Bennett. Good afternoon, everyone. So this slide talks about period of performance, which is up to four years. So renewable annually for each of those four years, based on annual departmental application requirements and subject to availability of funds.

We anticipate an award date of July 1st. I would like to make a note here that this may change, depending on the actual award date. And having a four-month transition phase starting July 1st through October 31st, in which SCSEP participants will be moved from previous grantees to current 2020 program year awardees as necessary.

This performance (series ?) includes all necessary implementation and start-up activities. Next slide, please.

The only eligible applicants for this FOA are nonprofit organizations, federal public agencies, and tribal organizations. Please refer to the FOA for definitions of these terms, for eligibility and responsibility criteria. Details in 20 – sorry, in 20 CFR 641.

Eligible applicant agency or organization must demonstrate its ability to administer a multi-state program, specified in section IV.B.4.a(5). The department reserves the right to award a grant to only one applicant per state, and to award an applicant funds to serve only one state. Next slide, please.

Applicants may apply to receive a grant under one or more of the – (inaudible) – categories. For (states ?) the general national grant funds, Indian/Native American set-aside grant funds, and thirdly the Asian and Pacific Islander set-aside grant funds.

Applicants applying for more than one category must submit separate applications for each, up to three applications. Please note that regardless of the category you select, all successful applicants are required to server any eligible individual within the awarded counties or state.

I would also like to bring to your attention the bold instructions in the applicant category section, page 8 in the FOA, that direct applicants to start the descriptive title of application project in block 15 of the Standard Form 424 with the appropriate wording to identify the applicant's category as general, Indian/Native American, or Asian and Pacific Islander.

Next slide, please.

As Steve mentioned before, SCSEP participants must be at least 55 years of – 55 years old who are not job ready and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level of about $50,000 (sic) per single-person household.

When selecting eligible individuals for participation in SCSEP, grantees and subrecipients must give priority to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics as provided in 20 CFR 641.520, which is also on page 11 in the FOA.

When selecting eligible individuals for participation, 38 USC 4215 requires grantees to provide priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans.

I would like – I would now like to turn it over to LaMia to continue with the presentation.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thanks, Maki. What we'd like to emphasize on the application and submission information is that you must ensure that the funding amount requested is consistent across all parts and subparts of the application. This information in the FOA is located on pages 12 through 36.

As you can see on this slide, there's information about the application package, the consent and form of application, which I think Steve will go over. There's no hard copy at this point. The SF 424. Please include a DUNS number. The requirements for the registration with SAM. Requirements to bid on authorized positions, where you can find that – which www.scsepapply.org. The project budget, what's composed in the SF424 and budget narrative. Project narrative and project narrative data, which is new for this FOA and we can talk about that in further slides. And attachment to the project narrative.

I believe I'll hand it over to Steve now.

MR. RIETZKE: Thanks, LaMia. And thanks to Maki and Bennett for your portions as well. On this slide we wanted to give you just a snapshot of what's in the various sections of the project narrative that you'll be responding to. We don't go into great detail in this because there's kind of a lot of different sections and we'd be here for a while. So we just wanted to give you an overview and thought the best way to do that is to sort of pull it out and highlight how much each section is weighted.

And so like most of our grant applications, you'll see a Statement of Need section where you'll discuss kind of the context for the project, the landscape in the communities that you're proposing to serve in terms of labor market information and so on.

The Project Design section asks you to get into some detail about your strategies for working with employers and employer associations. And also to talk about the types of evidence that are informing your decision to focus on those strategies. So is there research that you've seen or experience that you have that's playing into your decision making about what types of strategies to use in terms of employer engagement?

You'll talk about the ways that you go about recruiting and managing – the way that you will go about recruiting and managing host agencies, where participants will do the actual community service assignments.

And then strategies for providing quality service to participants. And again, asking you to talk about your evidence that's informing your decisions about those strategies.

Similar to many other grant applications as well, we ask you to talk about your organizational, your administrative and fiscal capacity. So your capacity to manage core functions of the program and operate the program. Your capacity to manage data, which is obviously important to running a program like this where we're very interested in the outcome measures, very interested in kind of interim data metrics that can help highlight where there might be issues that we can hone in on and improve.

Obviously your financial stability and your ability to adjust to changes that might happen from year to year in funding is a section that you'll be responding to. And talk about reporting and audits that you've had and your capacity in – either as a SCSEP grantee or another project.

Also a section on partnerships. Obviously a SCSEP grant does not operate sort of in a vacuum. SCSEP is a partner in the American Job Center network, the public workforce system. Partnerships with aging agencies – between aging agencies and workforce agencies obviously can really help to benefit seniors that are part of the program in terms of providing them a more holistic set of services and leveraging funds from those other partners or leveraging activities from those other partners.

So again, the detail for what we're asking for in that section – and all these sections – is in the FOA itself. But we just wanted to kind of give you a flavor for what's in the project narrative. You'll talk a little bit about your justification for the budget you're proposing.

And then we're going to talk in more detail about the past performance aspect of the FOA in just a bit. But obviously, that's a critical component of this application and we'll talk more about what that means in just a minute.

So moving on to the next slide. OK. This is still me. I'm going to turn it back to myself now.

Application and submission information. This is something we really wanted to pull out and highlight. This is something new that we're trying in this FOA. And something we're excited about including here, because I think we're really taking the sort of integration of the narrative and operational data to a new level in the way that we've integrated this data into this FOA.

So basically, we're requiring for certain sections of the narrative – and it's not every section, but certain sections – we're requiring applicants to incorporate and explain some quantitative data as part of the written response. And I think what we're really going for here is that, by doing this, you're going to have a chance to kind of highlight some metrics that ground your narrative in some objectivity or reality, where you can explain here's what these numbers are showing in relation to your narrative.

And so unlike in the past performance section that we'll talk about in a little bit, the panelists are not going to be rating you specifically on sort of what those numbers are, whether they're high or low or in between; they're really going to rate you on how well do you support your narrative responses through utilizing that data? So how well does your explanation of the data support the narrative that you're providing?

We note on the slide that current grantees and new applicants will take a different approach to submitting the project narrative data. And basically, what we've been able to do for current grantees is we've extracted a number of metrics from the SPARQ system. And at this point you should have gotten a workbook from us that shows each of your individual data sets.

For new applicants what we've done – and you can see all of this explained a lot more detail in Appendix A of the FOA. But for new applicants what we've done is we really described the nature of each of these metrics, the way that they're calculated, and we've offered some explanation for new applicants to help you figure out what might be analogous data metrics to provide in your applications.

And so we also note on the slide that new applicants need to provide a certification of accuracy for this data. And that's explained a little more in the requested attachments section of the FOA. We also note in parenthesis here that current grantees need to submit a certification if you submit any additional data for the project narrative. So you do have the opportunity, if you're a current grantee, returning applicant, to submit some additional data. But if you do that, we ask that you provide that certification of accuracy to – as we described in the FOA.

Now, I probably should have mentioned this on the previous slide, but I did want to point out there are a number of specific – or particular specifications for the project narrative. So I do want to point those out to you in the FOA and just make sure that we strongly encourage you – or you're required to follow those specifications very closely.

So the page limits, the page and – page size and the 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Please take those seriously because we don't want you to get disqualified on a technicality or things like that. So please make sure you follow those directions really carefully in terms of page limits and font size and all that.

I also did want to point out that someone was helpful enough in a question to point out to us that there's a discrepancy in the numbering system for these project narrative data metrics, between the FOA and the Appendix. And we're planning to issue an amendment to the FOA to fix that numbering scheme. I think it's just the numbering and the cross-referencing that's off; the content should be right. But I think there's maybe some numbers that are missing in the FOA and we're going to fix that through an amendment that you should hopefully see come out pretty soon. Maybe early next week, but don't quote me on that. I think it should be then.

So again, the numbering in the Appendix is correct. There's some missing numbers in the FOA and we're going to correct that through an amendment.

Going on to the next slide, on past performance. I mentioned earlier this is an important component of the application. Here again, similar to that project performance data, there's going to be a somewhat different approach between current applicants – current grantee applicants and new applicants.

If you're a current grantee, we're going to pull data from SPARQ in terms of your performance reporting. And if you're a new applicant, you're going to describe prior performance in a comparable program and provide us some detailed data on performance in similar kind of areas. So the Older Americans Act really tells us what dimensions we need to analyze in making awards. And you can see that citation there, Section 514(c) of the Older Americans Act. And so the dimensions that we have in the FOA really follow and flow from that statutory structure.

And so what we're looking at is prior performance in unsubsidized employment, prior performance on SCSEP core measures. So that's like the aggregate measures that we use to assess how well SCSEP grantees met the goals across the board. Community service, employment, and the greatest number served and most in need.

So we don't go into great detail here in terms of exactly what's included in each of those. But if you look in the FOA section on past performance, you can see a lot more detail on each of those. And I definitely encourage you to do that.

There's one other thing I want to mention. And I'm about to hand it to LaMia to go over the attachments, but I'll mention this first and then I'll hand it to her. We've also noticed that in the attachment section of the FOA we've listed specifically a certification of accuracy for past performance and project narrative data. And again, if you're a new applicant in particular, you need to give us a certification of accuracy for your past performance data. And that's – the specifications for that are described in the FOA.

What we don't see in that attachment list – and it should be there – is the past performance data itself. So we're also planning to put that in an amendment just to clarify that the past performance data that you submit doesn't count against the narrative page numbers, because we know those tables can take up a lot of space. So look for that in a subsequent amendment as well.

And that's what I wanted to cover on the project narrative and past performance. And I'll turn it over to LaMia, who's going to walk you through an overview of all the different attachments that are involved.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thanks, Steve. What a mouthful, right? So for the application and submission information, it's important to understand the required attachments versus the requested attachments. We don't want to get your application disqualified because you're not submitting the required attachments, which are: the application, the submission of application to the governor; a copy of the statutory provisions if you're a federal applicant; non-federal share exemption if it's applicable; and the federal agency applicant.

The requested attachments are listed on the slide, but it will not cause your application to be disqualified, such as: the abstract, project narrative data, past performance data, certification of accuracy for past performance and project narrative data, letters of commitment or MOUs, financial statements, indirect cost rate agreement, organizational chart and staffing plans, and financial systems assessment information. It will cause some deduction in points, but not for your application to be disqualified.

Next slide.

This is important. Submission time – submission date, time, and process. As mentioned before by Steve and Bennett – Maki even also – applications must be received by June 15th, no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Application must be submitted electronically and not hand-delivered. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application before the closing date and time to minimize the risk of late receipt or problems with the computer. Applications received after 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the closing date will not be reviewed.

Applications sent by email, telegram, or fax will not be accepted. And applications submitted must include a final bid through SCSEP Apply for the counties they propose to serve. This is important.

OK. Thank you and I'll hand it over back to Steve. Oh, is it still me, Steve?

MR. RIETZKE: It might still be you.

MS. CHAPMAN: (Chuckles.) OK. Yes.

MR. RIETZKE: I'm going to re-emphasize the point you just made about no hardcopy submissions. And also mentioned that there's actually an Amendment 1 to the FOA that really emphasizes that point. And it's in an amendment to sort of make it stand out, like, for real, for real, don't ship your stuff to the Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. Follow the electronic submission process.

Obviously because of the pandemic we don't know by mid-June sort of what the status will be in terms of folks in the building. But we're all – like you probably are – we're all calling in from our living rooms and home offices and wherever we are. So do make sure that you follow that. Because if it shows up at the Frances Perkins Building in D.C., it's – I'm not sure who's going to receive it. So please follow that.

And I'll turn it back to you, LaMia.

MS. CHAPMAN: OK. Thank you. Thank you very much. For the application screening criteria, applicants should use the checklist provided in the FOA as a guide when preparing the application. Applications that do not meet all the screening criteria will not move forward through the merit review process. Next slide, please.

Award notices. All award notifications will be posted on the ETA home page, as you can see the link. Applicants selected for awards will be contacted directly before the grant execution. Non-selected applicants will be notified by mail or email and may request a written debriefing on the significant weaknesses of their application.

Selection of an organization as a recipient does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, the department may enter into negotiations about such items as program content, staffing and funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation.

The department also reserves the right not to fund any application related to this FOA and all grantees will be subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the OMB Uniform Guidance and the terms and conditions of the award. Next slide.

OK. Special program requirements. ETA evaluation. As a condition of the grant award, grantees are required to participate in an evaluation, if undertaken by DOL.

And performance goals. We want you to understand all applicants will be held to negotiated goals and targets. And failure to meet those goals and targets may result in technical assistance or other interventions by ETA, and may also have a significant impact on decisions about future grants with ETA.

Now I'll pass it off to Steve.

MR. RIETZKE: Great. Thank you. OK. So this slide goes over a number of award administration requirements. And basically, these are things that – or these are restrictions or parameters that would apply to your grant if you're successful in the competition. And these are all spelled out in the sections of the regulations that are listed up here on the slide.

But we wanted to pull a few of those most important ones out and kind of mention them to you, just so you know – particularly if you're not a SCSEP grantee already, so that you know some of the requirements that your grant would be subject to.

So the first one is called use of grant funds for participant wages. And basically, under normal circumstances a grantee needs to spend a minimum of 75 percent of their SCSEP grant funds on participant wages and fringe benefits. So I mentioned at the beginning that a big component of SCSEP is really paying participants' wages in their community service assignments and in their training activities.

And so here, this is sort of putting a number on that, that there's a minimum spending limit. This goes back to the statutes and the regulations and it's something to take seriously under a SCSEP award, because that's essentially a condition of the grant, that you need to spend that much on participant wages and fringe benefits.

There is sort of a process for submitting what we kind of call a special request to do additional training and supportive services that may allow you to use a portion of that on training and support services costs. I won't get totally into detail on that here, but you can find information about that in SCSEP regulations and guidance.

There is an administrative cost limitation. Normally that's 13.5 percent. There is a process by which grantees can request to go up to 15 percent. We're in somewhat of an odd period right now for admin costs because the CARES Act that responds to the coronavirus situation – pandemic – allows grantees to potentially go up to 20 percent.

We're in the process of issuing guidance on this front. And I think ultimately when the grant awards are made under this competition, we'll make sure – our grant shop will make sure that the terms and conditions of the award are updated appropriately based on any CARES Act provisions that apply. So that's just something to be aware of.

Long term, probably – hopefully by the second, third, fourth year of this grant cycle, we would be back to sort of normal business with that 13.5 percent administrative cost limitation.

There is a cost-sharing or match requirement. Again, this is an important thing to keep in mind. This is an important component of the grant and something that we definitely take seriously at DOL because it's a statutory requirement. It's a condition of the award. So make sure you study sort of what's required in that realm on the match requirement.

And then there's also something called maintenance of effort requirements. This one is probably a little more abstract than the other ones. But basically what that means is that a community service assignment for SCSEP participant can't – it can't reduce the number of employment opportunities or vacancies that would otherwise be available to individuals not participating in the program. So otherwise, you can't supplant normal employees with a SCSEP participant in a community service assignment.

You can't displace currently employed workers, including any partial displacement, reduction in hours, or non-overtime work, reduction in wages, things like that. You can't impair existing contracts or – and it shouldn't result in the substitution of federal funds for other funds in connection with work that would otherwise be performed. And – well, you can read the last one. I think that gives you the gist of it.

If you have any questions about that provision or any other provisions, definitely submit them through the point of contact in the FOA.

And on that note, we're just about finished. Thank you for sticking with us. We'll go to the next – the last slide, which provides Jeannette Flowers' contact information as listed in the FOA. If you have questions about the FOA, please email them to Jeannette Flowers – Flowers.Jeannette@dol.gov. And please reference FOA-ETA-20-09, along with your question, so that she knows what this – what the inquiry is related to.

If you have technical questions about SCSEP Apply, they should be entered into the "contact us" section of that website. So please do that.

That's all that we have for you today. I hope this was a helpful reminder for you all in terms of giving you an overview of the FOA. We wish you good health and stay safe. Good luck in the competition. And again, if you have questions, please email them to Jeannette Flowers at the address listed in the FOA. And we appreciate your attention today.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you.

MS. KASSAYE: Sorry. This is Maki.

MR. RIETZKE: Oh, sure.

MS. KASSAYE: One clarifying statement. During my presentation on eligible participants, SCSEP participants must be 55 years old and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of federal poverty level, which is $15,000 – 1-5-thousand – per single household. I saw another number for this figure. So it's 15 – $15,000.

MR. RIETZKE: Got it.

MS. KASSAYE: Thank you.

MR. RIETZKE: Got it. Yeah, thanks, Maki. And folks, if you're really trying to get into the details of the low-income guidelines, there is SCSEP guidance on those guidelines that you can find on our website, doleta.gov, for more detail and for the tables that go into that.

But thank you, Maki, for jumping in with that correction. And thank you all for sticking with us and for your attention on a Friday. I hope you all have a good weekend.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you, guys. Bye-bye.

(END)