

**Jobs-Plus Program
Frequently Asked Questions
Part of the Federal Social Innovation Fund
Updated November 12, 2010**

Note: As stated in the Jobs-Plus Request for Proposals (RFP), the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), update notices, and addenda posted on the website are official updates to the RFP. It is the responsibility of the applicant to read and adhere to the FAQ, update notices, and addenda posted on the website when responding to the RFP.

The CEO SIF Jobs-Plus question and answer period is now closed. This document incorporates all questions that were asked as of 11/9/10. Questions that had been asked and responded to in the November 5th FAQ are included here and noted.

Proposal Forms and Attachments

(Posted 11/5) Is there an active form that I could fill in electronically for Attachment 3 Background and Capacity Form?

A link to a downloadable active PDF form is now posted at:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/html/sif/jobs_plus.shtml.

Can you provide more detail about what a work sample would consist of?

A work sample could be an internal or external evaluation of a program operated by your agency, a guide/manual developed for your clients or staff, or other document that highlights the quality of your work.

Are Vendex reviews considered acceptable form of program evaluation as requested on pg. 22, item 4?

No. The work samples or evaluations provided should describe and demonstrate the scope and performance of the organization's previous work as it relates to the CEO SIF Jobs-Plus proposal.

We are asked to provide "three references that are familiar with the applicant's work in connection with programs of the type for which the organization will be seeking SIF funding." Do we need letters of support or just listed references? Can we list references who might be involved in the program (e.g., officials at city agencies such as NYCHA and NYC SBS) and can comment on our ability to provide the services?

The only information required is that which is listed in Question IV.B.3. It is recommended that the references are familiar with the organization's work. The only individuals who may not serve as a reference are those serving on any CEO SIF selection committee.

Could you connect me to the staff of the current NYC Jobs-Plus program at NYCHA's Jefferson Houses so I can learn about their staffing approach?

The program approach at any particular location incorporates adaptations to local conditions that may not be applicable to every site. It is therefore not recommended that proposers contact staff from the existing NYC replication site. Proposers are expected to incorporate the core elements of the model and develop local adaptations as appropriate. The components of the Jobs-Plus model that should be incorporated into all CEO SIF Jobs-Plus proposals are described in the RFP. For additional background

information on sites from the demonstration, applicants are encouraged to refer to the MDRC materials attached to the RFP and those provided on MDRC's website at: http://www.mdrc.org/project_publications_15_13.html.

Target Areas, Facility, and Population Served

(Posted 11/5) Do the recruited residents have to be “official” residents of the targeted housing development? What if they are not on the lease or they are family members of official residents who are staying indefinitely?

Jobs-Plus participants must be on the lease to receive the full menu of Jobs-Plus employment services and rent-based work incentives. If a participant is not on the lease in the target development(s), then he/she will not be eligible for the rent-based work incentives but may receive other program services.

Is participation in the program completely voluntary?

Yes, public housing authority residents are not required to participate in the Jobs-Plus program.

(Posted 11/5) Can you provide demographic data for eligible NYCHA developments?

Please see demographic data for eligible NYCHA developments now posted at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/html/sif/jobs_plus.shtml.

In the Jobs-Plus RFP, it states that “Applicants may choose to operate out of an available community center space in either the Adams (1,909 sq. ft.) or Monroe (2,200 sq. ft.) developments within Bronx CD 01.” We do not see “Monroe” as one of the eligible developments in Bronx CD1.

A correction to the RFP has been issued as Addendum #1 to the Jobs-Plus RFP. The only available community space is Adams in Bronx CD01.

If we chose to make use of office space available through NYCHA, would we be able to arrange evening and weekend access for services?

Yes, the sub-grantee would be expected to enter into a temporary license agreement with NYCHA for use and leasing of the space which will stipulate access as needed.

(Posted 11/5) The RFP states that in NYC the office must be within ¼ mile of the nearest building in the development. Is it acceptable that an organization has office space for recruitment enrollment, etc. within the ¼ mile radius and our training locations are at other sites within a mile radius of the recruitment office?

Yes, this is acceptable.

(Posted 11/5) Your RFP states that each proposal must designate a public housing development in which to embed programming and provides a map of acceptable developments. Astoria, Queens, is on the map provided by the Mayor’s Office. However, the RFP also states that each development must have at minimum 1,500 apartments. Astoria has 1,100 apartments. Does this mean that our organization would have to propose working with two developments or would Astoria, a very high need and isolated public housing community, be acceptable even though the number of apartments, at 1100, is below the stated requirement?

The RFP states for NYC (on p17): “Applicants should propose to serve a cluster or group of developments with at least 1,500 housing units for the purpose of marketing the program, in order to build an active case load of approximately 600-700 working age residents annually.”

The CEO SIF Jobs-Plus program in NYC is budgeted at up to approximately \$1,000,000 to operate on a scale large enough that at least 600 new entrants are served per year for the full SIF period (envisioned to be 4-5 years). Most NYCHA developments have less than the required 1,500 units, and therefore proposers are asked to identify a cluster of developments that would be eligible for program services. The program office may be physically located within or closer to one development, but the proposal should describe how it will market the program and serve residents of additional developments to reach the minimum target area. Note that the office must be located within walking distance (approximately ¼ mile) of the closest building it will serve. There is no requirement regarding office distance from the farthest development.

Are there performance goals or performance-based payments? Will there be bonuses for meeting targets?

There are performance goals. Page 9 of the RFP lists Year 1 target percentages for outreach and numbers to be served. Please see pages 17 and 18 for city-specific minimum numbers in each target area.

The specific terms of award (such as whether there will be any payments tied to performance) will be governed by the agreement signed with the Mayor's Fund and the sub-grantee. The CEO SIF Jobs-Plus Program Grant Award should be booked as a program restricted use grant by the sub-grantees.

The payment structure will be based on line-item budget reimbursement. The Mayor's Fund may advance up to 25% of the total sub-grantee award. Subsequent sub-grantee requests for payment based on actual allowable costs incurred, may be submitted on a quarterly basis.

(Posted 11/5) The "objectives" section of the RFP reads that "The selected CEO SIF Jobs-Plus program providers should reach 100% of working age (18-59) residents in its target development(s) through its marketing and outreach efforts. At least 35% of working age residents reached through these efforts should register for the program by completing an employment plan and working with staff over time." We fear that the 35% registration objective is unrealistic (based upon our existing outreach vs. enrollment experience) and that we would have to increase the target area to reach the annual 600-700 (in NYC) client load. Can we target a higher number of public housing developments in our marketing and outreach efforts in order to meet the number of clients (600-700) enrolled?

Yes. There is no maximum number for targeting and outreach. Update 11/12: See response below for further information.

Is it more important to enroll 35% of all working age adults or between 600 and 700 working age adults in the Jobs-Plus program? At the cluster of developments that we are proposing to serve 35% of working age adults comes out to over 1,000 people.

To ensure that Jobs-Plus services and resources are not spread too thin and that the program's saturation strategy can be implemented effectively, it is more important for providers in the first year to enroll a minimum of 35% of working-age adults, with expectation that this proportion will increase in subsequent years. The total number of housing developments and units targeted should thus not exceed the 1,500 minimum by an amount that will make it difficult to fund and operate the program in a way that eventually allows it to engage a large proportion of residents in any given development. In addition, the program must be able to extend rent-based work incentives to all working-age adult residents in the targeted development, operate a meaningful

Community Support for Work component, and aim to reach all residents with information about the program's services, its work incentives, and employment opportunities.

How many participants are sub-grantees expected to serve (numbers/average) per week or month?

Page 9 of the RFP lists Year 1 target percentages for outreach and numbers to be served, although providers will be expected to reach all residents in the targeted developments with information and messages about the Jobs-Plus employment services, employment opportunities, and rent-based work incentives through program marketing efforts and the Community Support for Work component of the model. Please see pages 17 and 18 for city-specific minimum numbers of residents that must be formally enrolled in the program in each target area while the program continues to try to reach and engage in other ways the entire resident population of the targeted developments. Because Year 1 includes start-up time it is anticipated that weekly and monthly numbers enrolled may be low initially but will increase substantially over time. Applicants should propose appropriate outreach and service projections as part of the proposal's work plan.

(Posted 11/5) In reading the required support services for this proposal it lists services for formerly incarcerated. Why would this be a support services working with NYC Housing Authority residents when current NYCHA rules does not allow anyone with a record to be able to reside there?

This RFP applies to New York, Tulsa, and San Antonio. Policies in Tulsa and San Antonio may differ from New York's policies. Providers in each locality are encouraged to refer to the appropriate local regulations.

In New York, not all who have been formerly incarcerated are excluded from NYCHA housing. See below for language excerpted from NYCHA's lease agreement and see a link to the table referenced below (from NYCHA Standards for Admission) at:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/html/sif/jobs_plus.shtml.

Tenancy & Criminal Offenses

As a condition of the lease agreement, tenants agree "to assure that the Tenant, any member of the household, a guest, or another person under the Tenant's control, shall not engage in:

- (i) Any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the Development by other residents or by the Landlord's employees, or
- (ii) Any violent or drug-related criminal activity on or off the Leased Premises or the Development, or
- (iii) Any activity, on or off the Leased Premises or the Development, that results in a felony conviction..."

If a tenant is found to violate this term, NYCHA may take tenancy administration action which may result in exclusion for a period of time depending on the offense (see table). For current tenants, criminal background checks are run for transfers and for requests to permanently add a person to the household.

In addition, applicants in all cities should note that the RFP cites (on p16) "services for the formerly incarcerated" as an example, not required, referral service that would be provided either by formal partners or through the program's referral network.

The Jobs-Plus model is community oriented and staff will be able to provide some services to family members of residents participating in the program. For example, a

resident program participant may refer her son to the program to obtain a referral for services for the formerly incarcerated at another organization, even if he is not a resident. The son would not be eligible for Jobs-Plus services associated with residency (i.e., rent-based work incentives) but he may receive other services while his mother is a program participant and a resident.

Program Approach and Budget

To what extent will sponsor organizations (Mayor's Fund, CEO, MDRC) "assist sub-grantees in partner cities with implementation" as stated in the RFP?

Please see pages 14 and 15 of the RFP for an explanation of, and the distinction between, technical assistance that will be provided by the Mayor's Fund Collaborative (which includes implementation support) and technical assistance/capacity building that the proposer may include in the operations budget.

To what extent do funders want replication of the pilot model? Or are they looking for creativity in proposed approach?

The purpose of the SIF is to replicate and scale up rigorously proven models. Applicants should incorporate into their proposals all components of the Jobs-Plus model that are required in the RFP. Applicants are encouraged to show creativity in adapting these core components to local needs and circumstances. But the proposed approach should remain fundamentally focused on improving employment outcomes for residents.

(Posted 11/5) Should "community coaches" be reflected in the budget as formal part-time employees or should they be regarded as volunteers who receive a stipend?

Providers may approach the Community Support for Work component of the Jobs-Plus model with different strategies. In some previous sites community coaches have been formal part-time program employees, in others they have been stipended volunteers. It is up to the provider to determine the implementation strategy.

How should the proposal's budget incorporate financial incentives? Would sub-grantees be expected to pay out financial incentives? Should these costs (such as metro cards, uniforms, etc.) be included in operating budget?

The main work incentives are to be tied to the rent and particularly to the existing, HUD-funded Earned Income Disallowance. Sub-grantees are expected to market and facilitate take-up of this federal benefit.

For residents who are not eligible for the federal benefit (if, for example, they have already used and exhausted the time-limited federal EID), sub-grantees will be expected to develop a plan for offering alternative rent-based work-incentives. Such a plan would be developed after program implementation has begun by the sub-grantee in cooperation with the local housing authority, facilitated by the Mayor's Fund Collaborative. The plan will be determined by and based on assessment of participants' needs and the program's experience in the first year. While the first-year budget does not need to include funds for this alternative to the EID, the proposal should include approximate projections (suggested 5-10% of the budget) for rent-based work incentives in subsequent years. The Mayor's Fund Collaborative will work with the sub-grantee after selection to further develop this program component.

Other non rent-based financial incentives for meeting stated program benchmarks (e.g., gift card rewards upon verification of three-month job retention) and/or financial assistance for work-related expenses (e.g., barrier reduction transportation assistance, uniform or professional clothing assistance) can be proposed by the applicant as

additional means for supporting residents' work efforts. If these additional incentives and work expenses are to be provided by the sub-grantee they should be part of the proposer's budget. The applicant should propose the scope and scale of this component as part of the implementation plan.

To what extent will sub-grantees be expected to provide qualified evaluation staff?

The proposer's budget should not include staff that are specifically and exclusively dedicated to evaluation. However, sub-grantees will be expected to accurately track, monitor, and report program data to the Mayor's Fund Collaborative. In addition, sub-grantees will be expected to cooperate with MDRC on evaluation activities. Please see page 19 of the RFP for a description of evaluation activities.

Will subsidized jobs continue to be available?

Subsidized jobs are not a core component of the Jobs-Plus model, but applicants, if they wish, may propose ways to refer residents to existing subsidized jobs programs or to seek other local funding in order to incorporate such a feature into their Jobs-Plus program.

Partnerships and Collaboration with Housing Authorities and Other Entities

On page 23, there is a series of questions about program partners. For the purpose of this series of questions are all partners (paid and non-paid) to be included, or only those who are paid partners?

Question IV.C.4. applies only to proposers applying as part of a formal partnership arrangement as it is defined on page 7 of the RFP.

Will Jobs-Plus integrate or complement existing Housing Authority Resident Employment Services?

In New York City, NYCHA Resident Employment Services is currently an active Jobs-Plus collaborator and will work together with the sub-grantee so that services are complementary and provided in a collaborative manner. Providers in San Antonio and Tulsa will also be expected to collaborate with existing Housing Authority-sponsored employment and training programs targeted to residents.

(Posted 11/5) Should applicants obtain a letter of commitment from the targeted housing development and/or tenants' association? Also, it states on p.7 that "applicants are expected to make referrals to a wide range of service partners—these providers are not considered formal partners." Is it correct that we do not need to include letters of commitment from referral providers?

Proposers should describe in the narrative and/or with supporting materials (such as a letter or examples of previous collaborations) current or planned working relationships with the targeted housing development management office and/or tenants' association. Such relationships will be important to the Jobs-Plus program. However, a letter of support is not a required proposal attachment.

Likewise, letters of support are not required of referral partners if they are not formal co-applicants (i.e., if they will not receive sub-grant funds to deliver core program services).

For residents already registered in a mandated welfare to work program, will NYC HRA allow credit for participants registered in Jobs-Plus? How has the Jobs-Plus program at Jefferson Houses in NYC approached working with public assistance and food stamp recipients that have federally mandated time commitments?

NYC Human Resources Administration and Jobs-Plus/Jefferson Houses (an existing Jobs-Plus replication effort) are currently piloting an option for cash assistance participants to participate in Jobs-Plus in fulfillment of their cash assistance work requirements. Based on the experience from the Jefferson Houses pilot, HRA and CEO will determine whether to expand the pilot to other locations upon consideration of the following factors: the number of residents in the selected housing development who are subject to cash assistance work requirements; the sub-grantee's capacity to provide two days per week of structured job search/training; and the sub-grantee's capacity to meet HRA's administrative and technical requirements. A decision about whether to expand the pilot will be made before the SIF Jobs-Plus project is launched. Should the pilot be expanded, the Mayor's Fund Collaborative will facilitate coordination between HRA and the provider.

Will the funding collaborators be available to coordinate policies among agencies and clarify what impact participating in Jobs-Plus will have on participants of other government employment programs such as WF1CC, EarnFair and Back to Work?

In New York, the Mayor's Fund Collaborative and local government partners will facilitate the coordination of policies among the appropriate government agencies. In other cities, the Mayor's Fund Collaborative will assist the sub-grantee and local partners with inter-agency policy coordination as feasible and appropriate.

Funding

Regarding item 3 on page 3, "Leveraged Funding": What amount or percentage of program costs are providers expected to raise? Can in-kind donations be counted towards this?

The SIF stipulates an overall 3 to 1 fundraising match for the federal grant. The Mayor's Fund Collaborative will take the lead on all fundraising activities. Providers will be expected to participate in and support fundraising activities for the full program period, including the research period. The SIF is envisioned as a five-year project and began in August 2010.

All funds used for the match must be in cash. Although in-kind donations cannot be used as part of the local match, in-kind contributions to the program are encouraged.

Will one overall grant be awarded per city or will NYC receive one award in each target borough?

One grant will be awarded in one of the four eligible boroughs in New York. One grant will be awarded in the City of San Antonio. One grant will be awarded in the City of Tulsa.

Can matching funds be used to support the additional services to be provided under the grant?

Yes, matching funds must be used to support the SIF-specific program operations of the proposing entity.