[ Please standby for realtime captions ] >> Hello this is Robin. >> This is Regina.

This is Rob from ACL the administration for community learning. We have a couple more minutes so we will try to start on time around 3:00 if that is okay.

Okay thank you. >> Hello this is Rob the administration for community living. We will wait a minute or so before we get started. I still hear some folks chiming in. >> Good afternoon everyone this is Rob Groenendaal. Hopefully everyone can hear me okay.

 I understand it's extension waiting circumstances this day so hopefully the audio is okay. I am not going to say this is the most exciting call that you were participate on but we have a fair amount of material to cover so I will go ahead and get started.

This is an informational call HHS 2020 ACL [ Indiscernible ] we are going to go through some of the important information with respect to the submission of an application for this funding opportunity announcement. There are some important dates. Obviously this is an informational call April 14. There is a due date for a letter of intent, this is not required but it is helpful for the review process. That due date is April 24. I can talk about that later but a simple email to my email address which I can state now and it is throughout the document that we are going over.

Please make sure that you submit your application on time. You are strongly encouraged to submit your application a minimum of 3 to 5 days prior to the closing date to make sure you do not have any technical difficulties because grants.gov for example can take up to 48 hours to notify you of the successful submission. Applications that do not meet the due date will not be reviewed and will not be considered so this is an important point so please ensure your applications are submitted on time. The purpose of the FY 2020 assistive technology A-T alternative financing program is to support programs for the purchase of A-T devices or acquisition of A-T devices such as a low interest loan fund, and interest buydown program coming revolving loan or loan guarantee or insurance program. We will go over some of that information in a little bit. We are expected to expand emphasize consumer choice and control. State agencies and disability organizations direct goodbye and operated for people with disabilities should be eligible to compete.

Applicant should incorporate credit building activities in their program including financial education and information about other possible funding sources. Successful applicants month emphasize control and ensure that all people with disabilities regardless of type of disability or health condition, age, level of income and resident have access to the program. As a result of the act of 2020 the Department of Health and Human Services HHS administrative ACL would authorize a fund for a one-year grant to support this funding opportunity and assist individuals with disabilities of any age to obtain financial assistance for A-T devices and services.

Under the FOA the funding opportunity announcement the applicant must establish one or more of the following type of AFP's. Low interest loan fund and interest buydown programs, revolving loan funds, a loan guarantee or insurance program, a program operated for the leads for other acquisition of assistive technology devices or services, another mechanism that provides [ Inaudible - static ] approved by the secretary. In order to be considered for funding and applicant must identify the types of A-T that is going to support the grants. The applications must contain an assurance that the policies and procedures will be submitted to ACL within the first three months of the project period. Some of those policy and procedures must contain certain information such as a procedure to review process [ Indiscernible ] request for financial assistance including eligibility and determination for specific devices or services to be financed through the program, policies, those that enable assurance with individuals with disabilities are able to apply [ Indiscernible ] location of residence, type of A-T device or service. Please note however it is permissible for programs to target individuals with disabilities who have been denying conventional financing as a priority toward the funding. Is mentioned policy for the expansion and influences of consumer choice and control, policy for sustainability of AFP the grantees must provide a sustainability plan that identifies the amount of funding as expected to be needed on an ongoing basis for program administration and loan capital. Policies incorporating credit building at 70s I mention into the AFP so those may include information about other possible funding sources. There is the fiscal and policy [ Indiscernible ] the successful applicant will provide the assurances of the grantee drawing down and placing funds in a restricted account , the grantee is permitted to draw the entire award in advance to capitalize a loan fund so long as the funds are placed [ Indiscernible ]

Please remember to mute your phones. The grantee will extend funds for the purpose of the designated implementation of the AFP and funds restricted within that account continue to all federal dollars placed in the account and used within that account for the purposes and intent of the AFP.

 For reporting there is of course the semiannual progress report without semiannual progress report is the information about the financial transaction so federal cash report submitted to ACL and then within the final federal financial report would be prescribed by ACL and that would be submitted 90 days after the 12 month project period in order to close out the grant award so there will be a submission of the semiannual report, the progress as well as fiscal information as well as a final report that is submitted. For previous grant recipients the previous grant recipients funded under this priority in previous years and have received awards from ACL provide information on the amount remaining in the restrict did account whether the funding has been used including the number of loans extended , individual funding leverage, credit building and activity in the previous awards.

Review reward information the estimated total funding for approximately what is expected is three 240 words that total funding is $1,973,000 around out. May be 1 million [ Indiscernible ] it's hard to say given the current climate but this is what is been projected in the funding plan for these projects. There is an award floor of $100,000 and the award feeling a $700,000. I imagine the length of the project period would be a 12 month project period and would be budgeted as such.

We talked about the eligible applicant including state agencies and disability organizations direct did or operated by individual [ Indiscernible ] to providing alternative financing services statewide for the purchase of AT. There is no cost-sharing or matching requirement for this competition. I want to emphasize some application screening criteria. Please be aware of the due date for applications 11:50 9 PM Eastern time on Friday, May 15. That is the deadline for the submission of the applications. The project narrative section must be doublespaced on 8 1/2 by 11 paper with one inch margins on both sides. With a standard font size of no less than 11 points preferably [ Indiscernible ] the project narrative that exceeds 24 pages will have additional pages removed and only the first 24 pages will be provided to the reviewers so there is a 24 page limit. The project work plan letters of commitment listing of key project personnel including resumes are not part of the project narrative for purposes of the page limit. If there problems that exist with the submission of the application please be aware that you will be required to provide the submission error notification and tracking number to substantiate the missing information for the deadline. There is some important information with respect to the universal numbering system done as well as SAM system for award management. The grants.gov registration process can take several days, just be aware of this information and if you need assistance you can go to WW.grants.gov and contact them at support@grants.gov or call 800 518-4726 between 7 AM and 9 PM. Applicants must have a D UN number and be registered within SAM the system for award management and the have a registration process until it's complete. If you are successful applicant then it would need to be registered and active in SAM beyond that date.

Once your SAM registration is active allow 24 to 48 hours for the information to be available on grants.gov before you submit an application through grants.gov. Note that the employee identification number is important with respect to accessing funding to the payment management system the CMS the system used by HHS ACL if you are successful applicant. Make sure you have your identifying organization information correct so just a quick run down register in SAM, obtain an active SAM provide the D UN number and be aware of the entire number through the processes.

There is a dedicated D UN number request line 866-705-5715. For the content of the application submission notice that 424 2020 date for the letter of intent to be submitted. It is requested but not required but it is helpful however for the review process. I want to emphasize of course within the project narrative the length is 24 pages. Please do not exceed the 24 pages, please make sure you note they need to be double spaced with one inch margins with the font size. Again the project work plan budget narrative justification, budget template letters of commitment, personnel is not counted as part of the narrative. So the FOA does have a sample component of project narratives within that 24 page limit. There is an example of the summary or abstract which should be no more than 265 words in be a description of the proposed projects such as goals, object Zen outcomes. With respect to problem statement the problem statement looks at the scope of the problem or issue that the proposed intervention is designed to address in its application. There is information about goals and object does and it should describe the goals and major objective of the funding to support programs that provide for the acquisition of ATA devices in ways that expand consumer choice as well. The proposed intervention should provide a clear description of what you are doing and should all so describe the rationale including lessons learned, from similar projects conducted previously in your community.

 There is a section their own special target populations and organization so describe how you plan to involve organizations in the planning and implementation of the proposed application. For outcome, with regard to this FOA the outcome should include improvement for individuals with disabilities to get AT devices [ Indiscernible ] consumer choice and control as well as a target and consumers as a result of the proposed project.

You should focus on describing the outcomes of the project, the evaluation section describes how the outcomes will be measured and reported. The project management this section

 should include a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of project staff, organizations and how they will contribute to the project objectives and outcomes. For evaluation this section describes the method technique until that will be used. Dissemination is a method that will be used to disseminate the results of the project and findings in a timely manner. Organizational capacity is a statement that includes an organizational capacity information as well as the project personnel involved with the project. Budget narrative justification can be provided using the format included in the FOA document. There is a sample format for your reference. For the work plan, this is again not part of the narrative to be reflecting the project narrative and budget in the goals and objectives that will be achieved with the project .

Letters of commitment from key participating organizations are important in the process. There is a potential to include them via fax to the ACL office of grants management at 202 [ Indiscernible ] it may be wise to submit the information within the application for those submitted electronically that can happen on letters of commitment. We know it should be a standard fax, however, given the current pandemic we don't exactly know about the ability to receive those factors faxes in the offices. It might be helpful to include those within the application. The due date for applications as I mentioned is close to midnight on Friday the 15th. You are strongly encouraged to submit your application in advance of that closing date please make sure that when you submit your applications via grants.gov that if you are doing that it should be designated by your organization as the authorized organizational representative and you should register yourself with grants.Galvez and AO are in those steps are detailed in and WW W grants.gov\[ Indiscernible ]. Some of the information is important with respect to contacting the support desk, contact them@grants.gov at one 800 518 4726. If you have an issue and you need the support of grants.gov support desk maintain that case number and keep a record of it funding restrictions instructions in our major rehabilitation of buildings are not fundable, basic research are not fundable, continuation of existing projects without expansion are not fundable. In terms of the criteria, the criteria section is the most important because you are looking at the applications scored by a maximum of 100 points across eight selection criteria. When you look at those criteria section A proposed intervention, target populations and organizations [ Inaudible - static ] [ There is background noise, there is a line not muted ] this is important for the reviewers of the application. Make sure when you write the narratives that the format identifies a response to the key components within the review criteria.

Some of those are proposed intervention, in fact they are all outlined in these are the criteria that will be used in the review of the application so proposed intervention for the points, for example it clearly and adequately response to the FOA, does the AFP include a high-quality plan for project limitation, does the representative have an approach to the funding opportunity announcement. Will the AFP address the needs of the target population are other identified needs. Is the AFP likely to build capacity to provide and expand services that address the needs of the target population. Will the AFT establish linkages with other agencies providing services, does the AFP have involvement. If you go down to special target population.

That section is worth 15 points. What is the likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed AFP on the intended recipient of the services. Will be AFP involved collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing effectiveness of the services well they address after week messes in services or opportunities. The problem statement is 10 points. Does the AFP proposed services appropriate to the needs of the recipients of those services outlined in the proposal? Are they focused on the areas with greatest needs? does it it look at the magnitude of the needs for those services? So project personnel five points the time commitments of the project director and key personnel as well as complications with [ Indiscernible ] director and other key personnel. Organizational capacity is 10 points. Focusing on the support and supplies and other resources from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization to conduct activities outlined. Demonstrated commitment of each partner in the project to implement the successful AFP. Is a budget insufficient for the projects and does the proposed AFT involve use of strategies including use of technology and leveraging of non-project resources? Project management five points focuses on adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed AFP on time and in budget. It focuses on mechanisms for ensuring high quality products and services from the proposed AFP. Does the AFP ensure diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the proposed intervention? This includes those individuals with disabilities family members guardians advocate teachers business community etc. >> Project evaluation is a method of evaluation appropriate to the goals objectives and outcomes of the proposed AFP. Does it provide examining the provided strategies? Does the evaluation provide feedback and permit periodic assessment? [ Inaudible - static ] is the budget submitted for FY 2020 grant award so those that this is an FY 2020 fiscal year so the awards are expected to be issued toward the end of the fiscal year so at the end of FY 2020 is that with respect to adequacy and resources to administer the proposed AFP. Does the AFP address the establishment of a restricted account for the use of this project? Use and control funds does it have a sustained of ability plan and the time commitment of the director and other key staff is at times sufficient to assure the establishment or expansion of the proposed AFP?

The review process there is an independent review panel that will evaluate applications that pass through the response and screening criteria. These reviewers are experts in the field and are drawn from academic institutions nonprofit organization in state and local and federal government agencies. Final decisions will be made by ACL by the administrator of ACL. The anticipated announcement award date, the successful applicant could expect to receive an electronic notice of award on or around August 15, 2020 and the anticipated project start date is September 1, 2020. I have not heard anything otherwise with respect to the timeline so I think it is feasible to assert that this timeline is doable. For the award noticing successful applicants will receive an electronic notice of award in the unsuccessful applicants are notified within a month or so of the decision and will receive a disapproval letter likely via email or perhaps US mail. Lately communication has gone more toward email notifications.

In terms of the administrative and national policy requirements within the award there is HHS requirements which can be found at 45 CFR part 75 and the standard terms and conditions included in the notice of award as well as implemented through the HHS grants policy statement. For reporting we talked about reporting previously about the requirement to submit a semiannual final report. The report frequency and notice of terms and conditions on the NOA. The remainder of the FOA talks about examples for the submission of materials. There is information about the paperwork reduction act application, instructions for completing some of those required forms in the online [ There is a phone line that is not muted causing backgroung noise ]application process. >> Note within the agency contact the officer listed, that is me. My email addresses their so that is Robert , the telephone number is 202 795-7356 or could be emailed with respect to questions and email questions will be helpful for the process as the intent is to put together an FAQ document to those who are interested in this FOA. The grants management specialist is low Rhonda Bloom in the office of grants management.

The area code is 202-795-7310. I am showing the time is 3:30 3 PM 3:30 PM . If there is a opportunity to respond to questions I think we could use some of that time now. If you do not want to ask a question on the conference call, the question can be submitted to me via email as in years past we have put together an FAQ document to assist applicants with this funding opportunity announcement. Please feel free to email me, that is the best way to receive a response. I can open up, is it possible for folks to unmute their lines and ask a question or do you want to follow up via email with your questions?

Could you repeat your phone number please?

Yes I will do that. You know what I don't call myself often but I have it written down here. The number is 202 795 73 56. If you want me to repeat my email I can the email and phone number are in the agency contacts section of this funding opportunity announcement.

Thank you.

You are welcome. >>

 Participants on this conference call if you would prefer to email me or call me with the question you can certainly do so. The best way to address the question quite honestly is to put them together in an FAQ document so that everyone benefits from the question asked as well as a response. This might be the best way to ensure that all of the applicants have the same information going into this application process. >> However, if you unmute yourself you can ask a question. If there are no questions we can wait a minute or two and if there are no questions I just want to stay safe stay safe and healthy during this time.

Thank you Rob.

 Thank you for your time and consideration today. I'm looking forward to submission of the applications for this funding opportunity announcement. Be well everyone. >> [ Event concluded ]