

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**  
**[Docket No. FR-5600-N-17]**  
**Fiscal Year 2012 Transformation Initiative:**  
**Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration Small Research Grant Program**

**AGENCY:** Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, HUD.

**ACTION:** Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Transformation Initiative: Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration, Small Research Grant Program (“Choice Research Grants”)

**SUMMARY:** Today’s posting provides information and instructions for the FY2012 Transformation Initiative: Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration, Small Research Grant Program (“Choice Research Grants”). This Notice is comprised of both the Notice of HUD’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), Policy Requirements and General Section (General Section) to HUD’s FY2012 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs, posted on [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) on September 19, 2011 and this program section to the NOFA.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE:** The application deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on **March 13 2012**. Applications must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on the application deadline date. Applicants need to be aware that following receipt, applications go through a validation process in which the application may be accepted or rejected. Please allow time for this process to ensure that you meet the timely receipt requirements. Please see the FY2012 **General Section** for HUD’s timely receipt and grace period policies.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Questions regarding specific program requirements should be directed to the agency contact identified in Section VII of this Notice. Questions regarding the FY2012 **General Section** should be directed to the Grants Management Office at 202-708-0667 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access these numbers via TTY by calling the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

## **OVERVIEW INFORMATION**

**A. Federal Agency Name:** Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, Program Evaluation Division (RRE)

**B. Funding Opportunity Title:** Transformation Initiative: Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration, Small Research Grant Program (“Choice Research Grants”), Request for full applications.

**C. Announcement Type:** Initial announcement.

**D. Funding Opportunity Number:** FR-5600-N-17; OMB Approval Number is 2528-0280.

**E. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** The CFDA Number for this program is 14.008.

**F. Dates:** The application deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on **March 13, 2012**. Applications must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on the application deadline date.

Applicants need to be aware that following receipt, applications go through a validation process in which the application may be accepted or rejected. Please allow time for this process to ensure that you meet the timely receipt requirements.

Applicants are required to register with Grants.gov. Registration requires a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number, active registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), and authorization by the applicant organization eBusiness Point of Contact identified in the CCR registration to authorize the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) to submit the application on behalf of the applicant. Failure to have a complete registration will result in your application being rejected by the Grants.gov system. Please allow time for the registration process and the Grants.gov system to ensure that you meet the timely receipt requirements.

Please see the FY2012 **General Section** for instructions for timely receipt, including actions to take if the application is rejected. Applicants should carefully read the APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS and the SUBMISSION INFORMATION in the 2012 **General Section**, posted to Grants.gov on September 19, 2011. This section contains information for using the most current Adobe Reader, timely receipt policies, and other application information

## **G. Additional Overview Content Information**

**1. Purpose of the Program.** To develop and implement small scale research projects that build upon the larger Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration research project.

**2. Award Information.** This program is undertaken by HUD's research authority under the Transformation Initiative Fund. The maximum award performance period is 3 years (36 months). The maximum amount that can be requested is \$200,000. Awards under this Notice will be made in the form of a Cooperative Agreement.

**3. Eligible Applicants.** Nonprofit organizations, for profit organizations located in the U.S (HUD will not pay fee or profit for the work conducted under this NOFA), foundations, think tanks, consortia, institutions of higher education accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and other entities that will sponsor a researcher, expert or analyst. HUD will not directly fund individual researchers. HUD will not directly fund entities or individuals already involved in HUD-funded Choice Neighborhoods research under Task OrderC-CHI-01127/TO001. See listing of eligible applicants below.

## FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

### I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION.

HUD invites applicants to submit proposals for funding to complement HUD's larger research effort on the Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration.

#### A. Background

Choice Neighborhoods is a new HUD initiative that builds on the experiences of HOPE VI and aims to transform entire neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into "functioning, sustainable mixed income neighborhoods with appropriate services, public assets, transportation and access to jobs, and schools..." On August 31, 2011 HUD announced that Chicago, Boston, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle would be the initial recipients of Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants. A summary of each of these grants is available at <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=CNFY2010-2011.pdf>.

HUD has also established a blanket purchase agreement (BPA) for research on Choice Neighborhoods. On September 28, 2011 HUD awarded the initial task order under that BPA to initiate an evaluation of the Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration (C-CHI-01127/TO001). The research funded under this initial task order will be referred to as the "Choice baseline research project". The Choice baseline research project will focus on implementation grants awarded to Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans. At those sites, the Choice baseline research project will document baseline conditions, describe the revitalization efforts in those neighborhoods, and document the early outcomes of these efforts. Key components of the research design for the Choice baseline research project include:

- Review of the transformation plans submitted to HUD as part of the application.
- Establishing a panel of residents in the Choice Neighborhoods, creating a survey instrument, collecting baseline survey information, and establishing procedures for long-term tracking and follow-up.
- Interviews with grantee staff, and focus groups with residents of the Choice Neighborhood sites and other stakeholders.
- Reports to HUD describing the implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods transformation plans.

#### B. Goals of this Research Program/Topics

The goal of this research program is to fund research related to Choice Neighborhoods that complements the work already being funded by HUD through the Choice baseline research project (C-CHI-01127/TO001). Since the Choice baseline research project will focus on implementation grants in Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans, applicants are encouraged to identify research projects in other Choice Neighborhood implementation or planning grant sites. Research projects in Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans will be eligible but the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed research would complement research already planned through the Choice baseline research project.

There are some substantial challenges in evaluating a program like Choice Neighborhoods. First, it is difficult to establish a convincing counterfactual of what would have happened to the neighborhood and its residents in the absence of the Choice Neighborhoods intervention. Second, because Choice Neighborhoods combines a variety of services and investments—related to housing, education, public safety, job training, etc.—it is difficult to explain why a particular approach does or doesn't work. Third, neighborhoods are dynamic—the people and businesses that participate in, or rely upon, a neighborhood are constantly changing. The Choice Neighborhoods investment may have benefits that accrue to individuals, businesses, or other entities not captured in the Choice baseline research project, which focuses on the neighborhood and the individuals living there at baseline. Applicants are encouraged to identify research that will overcome these challenges and provide clear evidence of the impact of Choice Neighborhoods.

HUD is using this NOFA rather than a contract (or task order under the existing BPA) for two reasons:

1. To solicit research ideas that are related to Choice Neighborhoods, but that are not already apparent to HUD, and
2. To broaden the community of researchers working on Choice Neighborhoods. Proposals should identify research questions that will help to demonstrate the impacts of Choice Neighborhoods or to help improve the program. HUD does not intend to fund research that would be duplicative of work being funded through the Choice baseline research project, so applicants are advised to review HUD's RFQ R-CHI-01091, published on February 22, 2011. Specifically, see Section G – Attachment 1 – Initial Task Order. This is available by email from [Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov](mailto:Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov).

### **C. Authority**

This program is undertaken by HUD's research authority under the Transformation Initiative Fund. It is being implemented through this NOFA, which, among other things, establishes the policies governing its operation.

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

**A. Funding Available.** The FY2012 Transformation Initiative: Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration, Small Research Grant Program ("Choice Research Grants") has approximately \$500,000 available for this program. An applicant can request up to \$200,000 for a three-year (36 months) award performance period. Awards under this Notice will be made in the form of a Cooperative Agreement. A Cooperative Agreement means that HUD will have substantial involvement during performance of the contemplated research project that may include, but will not be limited to:

1. Review and suggestion of amendments by HUD to the effort, including objectives, work plan, and deliverables.

2. Review by HUD of preliminary deliverables and quarterly progress reports delivered by the grantee.
3. Review by HUD of final deliverables.

### III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

**A. Eligible Applicants.** Nonprofit organizations, for profit organizations located in the U.S. (HUD will not pay fee or profit for the work conducted under this NOFA), foundations, think tanks, consortia, Institutions of higher education accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and other entities that will sponsor a researcher, expert or analyst. HUD will not directly fund individual researchers.

Since one purpose of this NOFA is to broaden the community of researchers working on Choice Neighborhoods, HUD will not directly fund entities or individuals already involved in HUD-funded Choice Neighborhoods research under Task Order C-CHI-01127/TO001.

**B. Cost Sharing or Matching.** None Required.

#### C. Other

**1. Eligible Activities.** Award funds awarded under this NOFA must be used to support direct and indirect costs incurred in the timely completion of the research product.

**2. Eligible costs.** Eligible costs include, but are not limited to, the researcher's salary; assistants to work on the project; protected release time for researchers who demonstrate the need for a period of intensive research; computer software; purchase of data; transcription services, and compensation for interviews.

Travel expenses are not an eligible cost, in order to encourage applications from researchers located in the vicinity of the Choice Neighborhoods sites. Applicants may fund travel from other sources of funding.

**3. Threshold Requirements Applicable to All Applicants.** All applicants must comply with the threshold requirements as defined in Section III.C.2 of the FY2012 General Section and the requirements listed below. All members of a consortium or research team must meet the threshold set forth at Section III.C.2.d of the FY2012 **General Section** "Resolution of Outstanding Civil Rights Matters." **Applications that do not meet the threshold requirements will not be eligible to receive an award.**

- a. The applicant must meet the eligibility requirements as defined in Section III. A, Eligible Applicants;
- b. All proposals must be for research projects;

- c. All projects must have a focus on the Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration and complement or enhance the larger HUD research effort (Choice baseline research project);
- d. The applicant may not request more funding than the maximum award amount as outlined in Section II;
- e. Applications must receive **a minimum score of 75 points** to be considered for funding;
- f. The applicant (represented as the official organization) must have a DUNS number and an active registration at the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) to receive HUD grant funds (see the FY2012 **General Section**); and
- g. To meet timely receipt requirements electronic applications must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time by the application deadline date. **See the FY2012 General Section regarding timely receipt and grace period policies.**

**4. Other Requirements.** All applicants must comply with the nondiscrimination and other requirements as defined in Section III.C.5 of the FY2012 **General Section** (and the requirements listed below).

**a. Compliance with Fair Housing and Civil Rights Laws.**

- (1) With the exception of federally recognized Indian tribes and their instrumentalities, applicants and their sub recipients must comply with all applicable fair housing and civil rights requirements in 24 CFR 5.105(a), including, but not limited to, the Fair Housing Act; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974;
- (2) If the applicant is conducting programs or activities with funds received under a HUD program NOFA in a state or local jurisdiction that has passed a law or laws proscribing discrimination in housing based upon sexual orientation or gender identity; or, a law or laws proscribing discrimination in housing based on lawful source of income, the applicant and its subrecipients must comply with those laws of the states or localities in which the programs or activities are conducted;
- (3) If you are a federally recognized Indian tribe, you must comply with the nondiscrimination provisions enumerated at 24 CFR 1000.12, as applicable.

**b. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Requirements.** Under Section 808(e)(5) of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3608(e)(5)), HUD has a statutory duty to affirmatively further fair housing. HUD requires the same of its funding recipients. Applicants under this NOFA are not required to submit an affirmatively furthering fair housing plan for their proposed research activities. However, applicants are encouraged to review the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, PHA Plan, and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (for example, HUD's regulations at 24 CFR 91.225 (a)) in the jurisdiction in which their research activities will take place in order to take into account impediments to fair housing choice in their proposed research.

**c. Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).”** Executive Order 13166 seeks to improve access to federally assisted programs and activities for individuals who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency. Applicants obtaining federal financial assistance from HUD shall take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities to LEP individuals. As an aid to recipients, HUD published *Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients: Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons* (LEP Guidance) in the Federal Register on January 22, 2007 (72 FR 2732). For assistance and information regarding LEP obligations, go to [http://www.justice.gov/crt/lep/guidance/HUD\\_guidance\\_Jan07.pdf](http://www.justice.gov/crt/lep/guidance/HUD_guidance_Jan07.pdf). For more information on LEP, please visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm>.

**d. Accessible Technology.** Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 508) requires HUD and other federal departments and agencies to ensure, when developing, procuring, maintaining, or using electronic and information technology (EIT), that the EIT allow, regardless of the type of medium, persons with disabilities to access and use information and data on a comparable basis as is made available to and used by persons without disabilities. Section 508’s coverage includes, but is not limited to, computers (hardware, software, word processing, email, and Internet sites), facsimile machines, copiers, and telephones. Among other things, Section 508 requires that, unless an undue burden would result to the federal department or agency, EIT must allow individuals with disabilities who are federal employees or members of the public seeking information or services to have access to and use of information and data on a comparable basis as made available to employees and members of the public who are not disabled. Where an undue burden exists to the federal department or agency, alternative means may be used to allow a disabled individual use of the information and data. Section 508 does not require that information services be provided at any location other than one at which the information services are generally provided. HUD encourages its funding recipients to adopt the goals and objectives of Section 508 by ensuring, whenever EIT is used, procured, or developed, that persons with disabilities have access to and use of the information and data made available through the EIT on a basis comparable as is made available to and used by persons without disabilities. This does not affect recipients’ required compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and, where applicable, the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants and recipients seeking further information on accessible technology should go to <http://www.section508.gov/>.

**e. Conducting Business in Accordance with Core Values and Ethical Standards/Code of Conduct.** If awarded assistance under this NOFA, prior to entering into a cooperative agreement with HUD, you will be required to submit a copy of your code of conduct and describe the methods you will use to ensure that all officers, employees, and agents of your organization are aware of your code of conduct. See the FY2012 **General Section** for information about conducting business in accordance with HUD’s core values and ethical standards.

#### **IV. APPLICATION, SUBMISSION AND TIMELY RECEIPT INFORMATION**

##### **A. Instructions to Download Application Package**

Applications can be downloaded from the web at: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) All applications must be submitted electronically. The information required to submit an application is contained in the program section of this Notice and the FY2012 **General Section**. See the FY2012 **General Section** for specific procedures concerning the electronic application submission and timely receipt requirements. Grants.gov provides customer support information on its website at <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>. Applicants having difficulty accessing the application and instructions or having technical problems can receive customer support from Grants.gov by calling 800-518-GRANTS (this is a toll-free number), or by sending an email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Help Desk can be reached twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, except federal holidays. HUD recommends calling the Help Desk rather than emailing, because determining the basis for the problem may take some conversation with the Grants.gov Support Customer Service Representative. See the FY2012 **General Section** for information regarding the registration process or ask for registration information from the Grants.gov Support Desk.

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission.**

**1. Application Content.** Applications must consist of the following elements: SF424 Application for Federal Assistance; a table of contents; an executive summary; a narrative for the rating factors; a budget; budget narrative; and additional forms. Before submitting your application, please read the FY2012 **General Section** regarding use of Adobe Reader, file naming conventions, and other information to help you avoid problems.

**a. SF424 Application for Federal Assistance.** Please remember the following:

- (1) The name of the official applicant for this program. Please make sure that the name of the organizational applicant in box 8a is the organization's legal name and that the organization's DUNS number and address are listed on this form (not the researcher's information). When entering the zip code, be sure to enter the 9-digit zip code.
- (2) Include the name, title, address, telephone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address of the designated contact person. This is the contact at the organization **who will receive all pertinent information from HUD regarding this application; therefore, please ensure the accuracy of the information; this person must have knowledge of the content of the application submitted under this program. Please be sure the email account will accept messages from HUD.gov.**
- (3) The total award amount requested for the total performance period of the award.
- (4) The organizational applicant's Employer Identification/Tax ID.
- (5) The DUNS Number associated to the applicant's legal name identified in Box 8a of the SF424 form.
- (6) The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for the program is 14.530.

(7) The signature of the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), who by virtue of submitting an application via **Grants.gov**, has been authenticated by the credential provider and approved by the organizational applicant's eBusiness Point of Contact to submit applications on behalf of the organization. If the AOR has not been granted approval to submit the application, the application will be rejected by the Grants.gov system. The AOR must be able to make a legally binding agreement for the sponsoring organizational entity.

**b. Table of Contents.**

**c. Executive Summary (600 words or less).** The Executive Summary should, at a minimum, include a summary of the proposed research project with the following information:

- (1) Title of the proposed research.
- (2) The specific objective of the research.
- (3) How the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for the program.
- (4) Address, telephone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address for the lead researcher.

**d. Narrative Statement Addressing the Rating Factors.** HUD will use the narrative response to the "Rating Factors" to evaluate, rate, and rank full applications. The narrative statement is the main source of information when rating and ranking applications. Therefore, it is very important that the researcher becomes fully familiar with the rating factors for the program. The narrative should be numbered in accordance with each factor and sub-factor. Make sure to address each factor and sub-factor and provide sufficient information about every element. The application narrative, bibliographies, and any supporting references must not exceed 20 pages in length (excluding forms, assurances, budget narrative, table of contents, and executive summary), and must be submitted and formatted to fit an 8 ½ by 11-inch paper, double-spaced, with one-inch margins (for the top, bottom, left, and right sides of the document) in standard Times New Roman 12-point font. Each page must be numbered and the name of the applicant and researcher must be on each page. The double-spacing requirement applies to the narrative section of the application (excluding references and bibliographies). Submitting pages in excess of the page limit will not disqualify an application; however, HUD will not consider the information on any excess page. This exclusion may result in a lower score or failure to meet a threshold requirement. **Please do not attach responses to each factor separately. Please follow the instructions on use of zipped files, file extensions, and file names in the FY2012 General Section. File names should not contain spaces, dashes, or special characters. Failure to follow the file name requirements can result in the application being rejected by the Grants.gov system.**

**e. Budget.** The budget submission must include the following:

- (1) **HUD\_424\_CB\_Grant\_Application\_Detailed\_Budget.** This budget form shows the total budget by year (12 month period) and by line item for the program activities to be carried out with the proposed HUD grant. Make sure that the amount shown on the SF\_424, HUD\_424\_CB,

and budget narrative are consistent and the budget totals are correct. Remember to check addition in totaling the categories on the HUD\_424\_CB form so that all items are included in the total. The budget form must be fully completed. If there is any inconsistency between any required forms and/or budget narrative, the HUD\_424\_CB will be used. If this correction puts an application over the grant maximum, the researcher will not be able to correct the amount requested and the application will be disqualified. If an application is selected for award, the researcher may be required to provide greater specificity to the budget during grant agreement negotiations.

**(2) Budget Narrative.** A narrative must be submitted that explains how the researcher arrived at the cost estimate for each line item. The proposed cost should be reasonable for the work to be performed and consistent with rates established for the level of expertise required to perform the work proposed. The researcher must pay close attention to accurately estimating costs, determining the necessity for and reasonableness of costs proposed, and correctly computing all budget items and totals.

**(3) Indirect Costs.** Indirect costs, if applicable, are allowable based on an established approved indirect cost rate. **Applicants must have on file, and submit to HUD if selected for award, a copy of their approved indirect cost rate agreement.** Applicants that are selected for funding but do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement established by the cognizant federal agency, will be required to establish a rate. In such cases, HUD will issue an award with a provisional rate and assist applicants with the process of establishing a final rate.

**f. Appendix.** The appendix section of an application may include resumés and two letters of recommendation. This section will not count against the page limit.

**g. Forms.** All forms listed below must be placed in the appendix section of the application. The following forms are needed for submission:

(1) SF\_424\_Supplement\_Survey\_on\_Ensuring\_Equal\_Opportunities\_for\_Applicants (Faith\_Based\_EEO\_Survey (SF\_424 SUPP)).

(2) SF\_LLL\_Disclosure\_of\_Lobbying\_Activities, if applicable.

(3) HUD\_2880\_Applicant/Recipient\_Disclosure/Update Report

(4) HUD\_Applicant\_Recipient\_Disclosure\_Report), if applicable

(5) HUD\_2993\_Acknowledgement\_of\_Applicant\_Receipt. Applicants are not required to include this form for electronic applications as they can track their application on line by going to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and clicking on “Track My Application”. Applicants that have requested a waiver and are approved for the submission of a paper application may use this form to obtain a receipt.

(6) HUD\_96011\_Third\_Party\_Documentation\_Facsimile\_Transmittal (Facsimile\_Transmittal\_Form on Grants.gov). This form must be used as the cover page to transmit third party documents and other information. Applicants are advised to download the application package and complete the SF\_424, which will pre-populate the Transmittal Cover

page. The Transmittal Cover page will contain a unique identifier embedded in the page that will help HUD associate your faxed materials to your application. Please do not use your own fax sheet. HUD will not read any faxes that are sent without the HUD\_96011 fax transmittal cover page. **Note: In order for the application to be transmitted you must complete this form even if you are not faxing any documents. In the section of the form titled “Name of Document Transmitting,” enter the words “Nothing Faxed with this Application.” Complete the remaining highlighted fields and enter the number “1” in the section of the form titled “How many pages (including cover) are being faxed?” It is important that you read the FY2012 General Section for other specifics.**

**2. Certifications and Assurances.** Please read the FY2012 **General Section** for detailed information on all Certifications and Assurances. When submitting attachment files, please pay close attention to the requirements for naming the attachment files. Attachment file names cannot have spaces, dashes, special characters or be longer than 50 characters in length. Failure to follow these directions will result in a “VIRUSDETECT” error message and your application being rejected by the Grants.gov system.

### **C. Receipt Dates and Times.**

The application deadline date is 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on **March 13, 2012**. Following receipt the application will go through a validation process. If the application fails the Grants.gov validation process, it will be rejected. Please see the FY2012 **General Section** for instructions for timely receipt, including actions to take if the application is rejected. Applicants should carefully read the section titled “INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO DOWNLOAD AND APPLICATION PACKAGE AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS” in the FY2012 **General Section**. This section contains information on using Adobe Reader, HUD’s timely receipt policies, and other application information. Applicants should be aware that the latest version of Adobe Reader being used by Grants.gov is Adobe Reader 9.4. Adobe Reader 9.0 is compatible with Adobe Professional versions 8.0 and higher.

**D. Intergovernmental Review** This program is excluded from the Intergovernmental Review process.

### **E. Funding Restrictions**

1. Funds awarded under this NOFA may not be used to pay for activities outside the scope of this NOFA.
2. Funding will only be provided to researchers who meet the standards for eligible applicants outlined in Section III (A).
3. Funds awarded under this NOFA may not be used to pay for computer hardware and/or meals.
4. Honorariums cannot be charged against awards under this program.

5. Fee or profit will not be paid for work done under this NOFA.
6. Applicants must comply with the Delinquent Federal Debt Requirement as defined in the FY2012 **General Section**.

## **F. Other Submission Requirements**

**1. Application Submission and Timely Receipt Instructions.** Applications under this Notice must be received electronically through the Federal website **Grants.gov** unless a waiver of this requirement is granted in accordance with the instructions below. See the FY2012 **General Section** for additional information on the electronic process requirements and how to request a waiver from the requirement if necessary. Applicants requesting a waiver must submit their requests in writing no later than 15 days prior to the preliminary application deadline date. The letter must be addressed to Dr. Raphael W. Bostic, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, and be submitted via e-mail or fax to:

Paul Joice  
 Program Evaluation Division  
 E-mail: Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov  
 FAX: (202) 708-4250

Paper applications will not be accepted from applicants that have not been granted a waiver. If an applicant is granted a waiver, the approval notice will provide instructions for application submission and receipt requirements. **All applications in paper format must have received a waiver to the electronic application requirement and must be received no later than 3:59:59 p.m., close of business, on the application deadline date. Applicants that receive a waiver to submit a paper application are not exempt from the requirement to have a DUNS number and active registration in CCR.**

## **V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **A. Criteria**

**1. Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Experience (25 Points).** This factor addresses the ability of the applicant to carry out the proposed research. Applicants must identify key project staff and partners and describe the relevant skills and expertise they possess. Applicants must also identify the role that each individual would play, including key responsibilities and projected number of hours. Applicants must also provide for each individual a resumé that includes educational background, work experience, and publications (please place resúmes in the appendix; these will not be included in the page count). Applicants must also provide two letters of reference (please place letters in the appendix; these will not be included in the page count). Using this information, HUD will determine the extent to which the applicant clearly demonstrates the following:

- a. (20 points) Key project staff and partners have appropriate skills and expertise necessary to conduct the proposed research.

b. (5 points) Key project staff and partners have adequate time to carry out the proposed research.

**2. Rating Factor 2: Need for the Research (30 Points).** This factor addresses the extent to which there is a need and a demand for funding the proposed research. HUD encourages researchers to undertake research that will assist the Department in implementing its policy priorities as established in the Strategic Plan for FY2010- FY2015. In reviewing this factor, HUD will determine the extent to which the researcher clearly demonstrates the following:

a. (10 points) The proposed research fills a need (i.e., based on identified gaps in the existing literature or knowledge from professional practice).

b. (20 points) The proposed research is related to Choice Neighborhoods and has significance for HUD, the Choice Neighborhoods program, and community development practitioners. The expected results or findings of the proposed research will help HUD and HUD partners to demonstrate the impact of the Choice Neighborhoods program, and/or to improve the Choice Neighborhoods program and similar community development initiatives.

**3. Rating Factor 3: Soundness of Approach (45 Points).** This factor addresses the relationship between the need for the research described in Rating Factor 2, the quality and effectiveness of the proposal, and methodology and actions proposed. Applicants must describe a research approach including the following components, and will be rated under this factor based on the extent to which these components are technically appropriate and feasible for carrying out the proposed research:

**a. Research Design.** (25 points) Applicants must submit a research design that includes:

(1) Research questions and a discussion of how they will address the need described in Rating Factor 2.

(2) Hypotheses related to the research questions.

(3) Methodology and how it will answer the proposed research questions. If the proposed research will utilize a statistical model, the model should be presented as an equation.

(4) A discussion of the validity of the proposed methodology.

(5) A discussion of the feasibility of the proposed methodology, including any challenges anticipated.

(6) A discussion of the quality assurance mechanisms that will be integrated into the proposed research design to ensure the validity and quality of the results.

**b. Schedule.** (18 points) Applicants must submit a schedule of all major tasks/benchmarks, including for each:

i. A brief description of the task and how it fits into the research design.

ii. An estimate of the time the task will take to complete.

iii. A discussion of key inputs (including data, staff, previous tasks that must be completed first). Sources must be identified for any inputs that have not been discussed elsewhere in the proposal.

**c. HUD Policy Priorities** (2 points). HUD encourages applicants to undertake research consistent with the HUD Strategic Plan for FY2010 - FY2015. HUD's policy priorities have been established to encourage applicants to take additional actions to help achieve HUD's strategic goals. As outlined in the FY2012 **General Section**, this year each NOFA will specify which policy priorities are applicable to receive points under the specific program, as well as the total number of possible points that may be awarded. Under this program NOFA applicants can only receive two (2) points and must respond to one of the following two policy priorities: 1) Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing, or 2) Expand Cross-Cutting Policy Knowledge. Each policy priority listed has a value of up to two (2) points associated with the priority. It is up to the applicant to determine which of the policy priorities outlined below (and only the priorities listed below) they will address in order to receive the available two (2) points.

**(1) Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing.** Applicants requesting the policy priority points must demonstrate the proposed direct impact their research can have in their field. To receive the full two (2) points under this policy priority an applicant must identify one activity from those listed below and discuss an appropriate measure of success to apply at the end of the award performance period:

**(a) Activities:**

- Implementation of a research dissemination plan.
- Integration of the research findings with other researchers or practitioners in the related field of study.

**(b) Measures of success:**

- Research is successfully disseminated to practitioners. Either 1) A Choice Neighborhoods grantee, or a community development organization administering similar activities, or a funder of community development activities (such as HUD, state Housing Finance Agencies, local government housing and community development offices, or foundations and other non-governmental entities) makes an improvement to their policies or program design as a result of the findings of the research, OR 2) The researcher publishes a resource (such as a book, a web site, or an implementation guide) that will enable practitioners to develop or improve their policies or program design as a result of the findings of the research.
- Research is successfully disseminated to other researchers and policy-makers. The researcher presents findings at at least one academic or professional conference in the related field of study, and publishes at least one research paper in a refereed social science journal (or other discipline, if appropriate for the research topic).

**(2) Expand Cross-Cutting Policy Knowledge.** To receive the full two (2) points under this policy priority an applicant must identify one activity from those listed below and discuss an appropriate measure of success to apply at the end of the award performance period:

**(a) Activities:**

- Identify opportunities for program improvement through collaboration across policy areas.
- Conduct presentations of research to policymakers or decision makers in different areas to enhance knowledge of housing issues.

**(b) Measure of Success:**

- Research is successfully disseminated to practitioners. Either 1) A Choice Neighborhoods grantee, or a community development organization administering similar activities, or a funder of community development activities (such as HUD, state Housing Finance Agencies, local government housing and community development offices, or foundations and other non-governmental entities) makes an improvement to their policies or program design as a result of the findings of the research, OR 2) The researcher publishes a resource (such as a book, a web site, or an implementation guide) that will enable practitioners to develop or improve their policies or program design as a result of the findings of the research.

- Research is successfully disseminated to other researchers and policy-makers. The researcher presents findings at at least one academic or professional conference in the related field of study, and publishes at least one research paper in a refereed social science journal (or other discipline, if appropriate for the research topic).

**Applicants that just list a priority, select priorities other than those listed above, or fail to address the minimum required items outlined, will receive no points under this subfactor. Please refer to the FY2012 General Section for additional information about HUD's policy priorities.**

**d. RC\_EZ\_EC\_II Bonus Points.** The **RC\_EZ\_EC\_II** two bonus points described in the **FY2012 General Section** do not apply to this NOFA.

**e. Preferred Sustainable Status Communities Bonus Points.** The Preferred Sustainability Status Communities two bonus points do not apply to this NOFA.

**B. Review and Selection Process**

**1. Application Selection Process.** Two types of reviews will be conducted: a. threshold review to determine an applicant's basic eligibility; and b. technical review that will rate and rank all full proposals based on the "Rating Factors" listed in this Notice.

**2. Rating Panels.** To review and rate applications, HUD may establish panels that may include experts or consultants not currently employed by HUD. These individuals may be included to obtain certain expertise.

**3. Ranking.** HUD will fund applications in rank order, until all available program funds are awarded. **In order to be considered for funding, an applicant must receive a minimum score of 75 points** out of a possible 100 points for Factors 1 through 3. The RC\_EZ\_EC\_II communities' and Preferred Sustainability Status Communities' two bonus points described in the FY2012 **General Section** do not apply to this Notice. If two or more applications have the same number of points, the application with the most points for Factor 3 shall be selected. If there is still a tie, the application with the most points for Factors 1 and then 2 shall be selected, in that order, until the tie is broken. HUD reserves the right to make selections out of rank order if the rank order would result in more than two awards focused on the same Choice Neighborhoods grantee, location, or specific research question.

HUD also reserves the right to reduce the amount of funding requested in order to fund as many highly ranked applications as possible. Additionally, if funds remain after funding the highest ranked applications, HUD may fund part of the next highest-ranking application. If an applicant turns down an award offer, HUD will make an award to the next highest-ranking application.

HUD will not fund any portion of an application that is not eligible for funding under regulatory requirements and that does not meet the requirements of the NOFA.

**4. Correction to Deficient Applications.** See the FY2012 **General Section**.

**C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Announcements of awards are anticipated on or before **May, 2012**.

**VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**A. Award Notices**

After all selections have been made, HUD will notify all winning official applicants (not researchers) in writing. HUD may require winning applicants and researchers to participate in additional negotiations before receiving an official award. For further discussion on this matter, please refer to the FY2012 **General Section**.

**B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.** Refer to the FY2012 **General Section**.

**1. Debriefing.** The FY2012 **General Section** provides the procedures for requesting a debriefing. All requests for debriefings must be made in writing, and may be requested during the 120 day period beginning 30 days after the awards for assistance under this NOFA are publicly announced, to Paul Joice, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Room 8120, Washington, DC 20410-6000. Applicants may also write to Paul Joice via e-mail at [Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov](mailto:Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov).

**2. Environmental Requirements.** The provision of assistance under this program is categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act

of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) and not subject to compliance actions for related environmental authorities under 24 CFR 50.19(b)(1) and (b)(9).

**3. Administrative.** Awards awarded under this NOFA will be governed by the provisions of 24 CFR part 84 (Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations), OMB Circular A-21 (2 CFR 220) (Cost Principles for Educational Institutions) and OMB Circular A-133 (Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations). Applicants can access the OMB circulars at the White House Web site at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html>.

### **C. Reporting Requirements**

1. All grantees that receive award funds under this program NOFA are required to submit quarterly progress reports which describe the progress of the researcher's effort and the likelihood that it will be completed on time and a financial status report (using the form SF-425). Reports must be submitted electronically.

At the end of the award performance period, the grantee must submit to HUD two copies and a CD-ROM containing an electronic copy of the researcher's paper documenting the research finding in its final version, as well as a final report which summarizes the entire work and achievements conducted under this award.

## **2. Recipient Reporting to Meet the Requirements the Federal Financial Assistance Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, as amended.**

### **(a) Recipient Reporting to Meet the Requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, as amended.**

**(1) Prime Grant Awardee Reporting.** Prime recipients of HUD financial assistance are required to report certain subawards in the federal governmentwide website [www.fsrs.gov](http://www.fsrs.gov) or its successor system.

Starting with awards made October 1, 2010 prime financial assistance awardees receiving funds directly from HUD are required to report subawards and executive compensation information both for the prime award and subaward recipients, including awards made as pass-through awards or awards to vendors, if (1) the initial prime grant award is \$25,000 or greater, or the cumulative prime grant award will be \$25,000 or greater if funded incrementally as directed by HUD in accordance with OMB guidance; and (2) the sub-award is \$25,000 or greater, or the cumulative subaward will be \$25,000 or greater. For reportable subawards, if executive compensation reporting is required and subaward recipients' executive compensation is reported through the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system, the prime recipient is not required to report this information. The reporting of award and subaward information is in accordance with the requirements of Federal Financial Assistance Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, as amended by section 6202 of Public Law 110-252, hereafter referred to as the "Transparency Act" and OMB Guidance issued to the Federal agencies on September 14, 2010 (75 FR 55669) and in OMB Policy guidance. The prime awardee will have until the end of the month plus one additional month after a subaward or pass-through award is obligated to fulfill the reporting

requirement. Prime recipients are required to report the following information for applicable subawards. This information will be displayed on a public government website pursuant to the Transparency Act.

- (a) Name of entity receiving award;
- (b) Amount of award
- (c) Funding agency;
- (d) North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for contracts/CFDA program for financial assistance awards;
- (e) Program source;
- (f) Award title descriptive of the purpose of the funding action;
- (g) Location of the entity (including Congressional district);
- (h) Place of Performance (including Congressional district);
- (i) Unique identifier of the entity and its parent; and
- (j) Total compensation and names of top five executives.

For the purposes of reporting into the FFATA Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) reporting site, the unique identifier is the DUN and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number the entity has obtained from Dun and Bradstreet, and for Prime awardees the DUNS number registered in the Central Contractor Registration as required by HUD regulation 24 CFR 5.1004.

**(b) Prime Grant Awardee Executive Compensation Reporting.** Prime awardees must also report in the governmentwide website the total compensation and names of the top five executives in the prime awardee organization if:

(i) More than 80% of the annual gross revenues are from the Federal government, and those revenues are greater than \$25 million annually; and

(ii) Compensation information is not readily available through reporting to the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC.)

**(c) Subaward Executive Compensation Reporting.** Prime grant awardees must also report in the governmentwide website the total compensation and names of the top five executives in the subawardees if:

(i) More than 80% of the annual gross revenues are from the Federal government, and those revenues are greater than \$25 million annually; and

(ii) This required compensation information is not readily available through reporting to the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC.) For applicable subawards, if executive compensation reporting is required and subaward recipients' executive compensation is reported through the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system, the prime recipient is not required to report this information.

**(d) Transparency Act Reporting Exemptions.** The Transparency Act exempts any sub-awards less than \$25,000 made to individuals and any sub-awards less than \$25,000 made to an entity whose annual expenditures are less than \$300,000. Subawards with a cumulative total of \$25,000 or greater are subject to subaward reporting beginning the date the subaward total award amount reaches \$25,000. The Transparency Act also prohibits reporting of any classified information. Any other exemptions to the requirements must be approved by the Office of Management and Budget.

**NOTE:** For the purposes of FFATA reporting requirements, "prime grant awardee" or "prime grant award" or "grant award" includes awardees of, and awards for, capital advances for the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly and Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities programs.

**3. Compliance with Section 872 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Pub. L. 110-417), hereafter referred to as "Section 872."** Section 872 requires the establishment of a governmentwide data system – the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) - to contain information related to the integrity and performance of entities awarded federal financial assistance and making use of the information by federal officials in making awards. OMB is in the process of issuing regulations regarding federal agency implementation of section 872 requirements. A technical correction to the FY2012 **General Section** may be issued when such regulations are promulgated.

HUD anticipates that the terms and conditions to its FY2012 awards will contain requirements related to meeting FFATA and Section 872 requirements.

## VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants may contact Paul Joice at 202-402-4608. Persons with speech or hearing impairments may call the Federal Relay Service TTY at 800-877-8339. Except for the "800" number, these numbers are not toll-free. Applicants may also reach Mr. Joice via e-mail at [Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov](mailto:Paul.A.Joice@hud.gov).

## VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

### A. Proprietary Information

Because it is the intent of this program to accelerate the use of the information provided, any information or research results which the researcher proposes to remain proprietary, must be discussed in their application. Since it is important that the information received be made

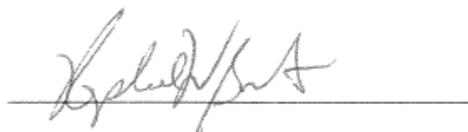
available, such request for retention of proprietary information would be considered during the review process.

**B. Paperwork Reduction Act.** The information collection requirements contained in this document have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520) and assigned OMB control number 2528-0280 for the Transformation Initiative: Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration, Small Grant Research Program. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to **average 80** hours per annum per respondent for the application and award administration. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting the data for the application, quarterly reports, and final report. The information will be used for grantee selection and monitoring the administration of funds. Response to this request for information is required in order to receive the benefits to be derived.

**C. Environmental.** This NOFA does not direct, provide for assistance, or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing, rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, or new construction, or establish, revise, or provide for standards for construction or construction materials, manufactured housing, or occupancy. Accordingly, under 24 CFR 50.19(c) (1), this NOFA is categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321).

*January 19, 2012*

Date



Raphael W. Bostic  
Assistant Secretary for Policy Development  
And Research

[FR-5600-N-17]