

# 2023 Tenant Education and Outreach (TEO) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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## Eligible Intermediary Applicants:

### 1. Who is eligible to apply to be the TEO Intermediary Organization?

Eligible applicants to be the intermediary organization are non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses, or HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agencies which have:

- Experience providing support and technical assistance to low-income tenants or community-based tenant organizations in multiple communities;
- Experience with the administration of grant or loan funds; and
- The capacity to serve tenant organizations anywhere in the United States.

Applicants may meet these requirements by submitting a joint application with an eligible co-applicant or co-applicants. See Section III.A. Eligible Applicants in the NOFO. Only one applicant will be selected to be the grantee intermediary organization for the TEO program. If the selected grantee is a joint application, the lead applicant will receive the grant funding and be responsible for complying with the requirements in the NOFO.

The selected applicant may be a single applicant organization, or a joint application that includes two or more co-applicants that will work together to accomplish program activities and meet program goals. No priority will be given to either single applicants or joint applicants. Both application types are eligible for selection as the intermediary organization if they meet the eligibility criteria in Section III.A of the NOFO.

### 2. Do applicants need to have a specific number of years of experience to apply to be the intermediary organization?

No. There is no minimum number of years of experience required to submit an application. However, this is a competitive NOFO process, and applicants will need to describe their relevant experience in their response to Rating Factor 1. To receive full points and increase the likelihood of selection, the application should describe the length and depth of experience for each described activity. Applicants with more relevant experience and capacity will be more likely to receive a high score and more likely to be selected as the grantee intermediary organization. The experience or capacity described may belong to the lead applicant or any co-applicants (if applicable), but which organization has done the work described must be clearly indicated in a joint application in the response to Rating Factor 1.

### 3. For a joint application, must all co-applicants individually meet the eligibility criteria?

All co-applicants must be eligible entity types: non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses or HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agencies that are not

owners or management agents of a multifamily assisted housing property, or their principals, or a subsidiary of an entity that owns or manages multifamily assisted housing.

For a joint application, the co-applicants must collectively meet all the remaining eligibility criteria noted in Section III.A. of the NOFO, but each co-applicant does not have to meet all the eligibility requirements individually. One or more co-applicants on your application may have experience providing support and technical assistance to low-income tenants or community-based tenant organizations in multiple communities, while another may have experience with the administration of grant or loan funds. While each co-applicant on your application may not have the capacity to serve tenant organizations anywhere in the United States on their own, the co-applicants on your joint application should have that capacity when working together.

Joint applicants must submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Agreement that demonstrates a commitment to work collaboratively throughout the entirety of the period of performance, identifies which party is the Lead Applicant, and describes the respective roles of each co-applicant. If a co-applicant is providing an MOU or Letter of Agreement for more than one application, they must indicate this in each application, and provide a list of all TEO applications on which they are co-applicants. See III.A. of the NOFO for additional information.

#### 4. Is there an incumbent grantee in the TEO program?

No. HUD has not funded grants with Section 514 funding since 2011, so there is no incumbent grantee.

#### 5. Can owners or managers of multifamily housing properties apply for TEO funding?

No. Organizations that own or manage multifamily assisted housing or are subsidiaries or principals of entities that own or manage multifamily assisted housing properties, are not eligible grantees or sub-recipients under this NOFO.

See Section III. A. B. Ineligible Applicants and Section III.A.G. Criteria for Beneficiaries in the NOFO.

If your PBRA property is served by a tenant organization, that organization may be eligible to apply for a sub-award once the sub-award competition is opened. See Section I.A.2. and III.G. for more information on tenant organizations. If your tenant leaders are interested in applying for a sub-award, they could sign up for the Multifamily email list to receive updates on the TEO program here:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USHUDFHA/subscriber/new?preferences=true#tab1>.

## 6. Are individuals eligible to apply for financial assistance, mortgage payment assistance, or rental assistance under this NOFO?

No. Individuals are not eligible to apply for financial assistance, including mortgage payment or rental assistance, under this NOFO. See Section III. A. B. Ineligible Applicants in the NOFO. The purpose of the TEO program is to support tenant capacity building at eligible existing Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) properties with the goal of preserving decent, safe, and sanitary housing within the PBRA program. Tenant capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, abilities, processes, and resources that tenants and tenant organizations need to be active partners in the preservation and improvement of their housing communities.

### TEO Sub-awards:

## 7. Will there be preference or priority in the sub-award competition based on the size or type of tenant organization?

No. The NOFO does not give priority in the sub-award competition based on the size or type of eligible sub-applicant organization. Sub-recipients will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligible sub-recipients are groups of tenants of assisted multifamily housing properties or tenant-affiliated community-based non-profit organizations that serve at least 25 units of multifamily housing at properties where at least 75 percent of the units are assisted under a PBRA Housing Assistance Payments contract. Sub-applicants may be small tenant organizations that serve only one or two PBRA properties, large local tenant organizations serving multiple properties, or tenant-affiliated community-based non-profit organizations that serve PBRA properties throughout the community or in multiple neighboring communities.

## 8. What are the minimum and maximum funding amounts for TEO sub-awards?

The maximum funding amount for a sub-award is \$300,000. There is no minimum funding amount for a TEO sub-award. Sub-applicants will work with the intermediary organization to develop their sub-award budgets based on their goals and planned activities. All items and amounts included in the sub-award budget must be reasonable and justified by the proposed sub-award activities. A sub-award could be as low as \$1,000 for a small sub-recipient tenant organization serving one building that is only seeking funds to cover flyer printing costs, a laptop, and reasonable fees for meeting space. While a sub-award for another sub-recipient could be up to \$300,000, for instance if a sub-recipient is located in a high-cost area, serves many units, would like to hire a full-time Resident Outreach Coordinator, and anticipates significant translation/interpretation costs.

## 9. Can newly-formed tenant organizations apply for sub-award funding?

Yes. A newly-formed tenant organization may apply for sub-award funding. However, not every eligible sub-recipient may be ready for sub-award funding right now. The intermediary organization will work with sub-applicants to help them assess their readiness for a sub-award.

Newly-formed tenant organizations may wish to submit a joint sub-award application with another, more established tenant organization or tenant-affiliated community-based organization if they are unsure whether they're ready to manage a sub-award, or if there is another organization in your area with similar goals and planned activities.

For instance, to receive a sub-award your organization will need to have an organizational bank account; you cannot use an individual bank account belonging to one of your members to receive sub-award funds. Banks have requirements for organizations opening accounts. The bank may require that an organization be established as a non-profit with articles of incorporation, bylaws, and elected officers in order to open an account. If your organization doesn't have a bank account, you may wish to submit a joint sub-award application with another tenant organization or tenant-affiliated community-based organization that already has a bank account.

Your organization will also need to meet regularly, operate democratically, represent all residents of the PBRA property or properties that you serve, and be completely independent of your landlord and property management. Operating democratically can mean electing officers and committees, or your members could choose to take turns facilitating meetings and make all decisions by a general vote of your membership (this generally only works well for very small tenant groups). You should not apply for a sub-award until you are confident that you can meet these requirements over the three-year period of performance of a TEO sub-award.

You may also wish to submit a joint application if there is another organization in your area with similar goals and planned activities. It is often more cost-effective to work together with other tenant groups in your area if you will be doing similar tenant capacity building activities, so a joint application may be a good way to make the most of a TEO sub-award, especially if you are a newly-formed tenant group. If your tenant group chooses to submit a joint application, make sure all the co-applicants have thoroughly discussed how you would work together to accomplish your goals and complete your planned sub-award activities.

## Intermediary Organization Requirements:

### 10. What is the geographic area that the intermediary organization must serve?

The intermediary organization must be able to serve local tenant organizations anywhere in the United States. See Section III.A. Eligible Applicants, sub-heading 'Additional Information on Eligibility' in the NOFO.

### 11. May applicants vary the proposed budget each year? For example, can we include start-up costs in years 1, 2, and 3?

Yes. Applicants may propose different budget line items and amounts in different funding years based on when they anticipate expenses will be incurred. Per the NOFO, applicants must provide a complete and detailed budget for the total performance period of the expected award through the submission of the SF-424A. The data submitted on the SF-424A form will

inform the expected financial assistance award for this NOFO. For the budget recorded on form SF-424A, provide a breakdown of the aggregate numbers detailing their allocation to each activity. The budget must also include a yearly breakdown of costs for each activity. In addition to the SF-424A form instructions available on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), applicants should use Appendix I. HUD's Guidance for Preparing a Budget Request in this NOFO, to complete the SF-424A. This information can be found in the table in Section IV.B.1 of the NOFO. All costs to perform eligible program activities, including translation and interpretation costs, should be included in the proposed budget.

**12. Is it OK if the trainings provided by the intermediary organization for the tenant organizations are virtual only? What requirements are there for the trainings?**

Applicants should describe their proposed approach to training in their response to Rating Factor 2. Applicants should describe how they would use an effective mix of remote and in-person communication that will achieve the program goals while using resources in a cost-effective manner in their response. Applicants should include a detailed proposal for how they will use remote and in-person communication with sub-recipients to achieve program goals over the performance period. Applicants submitting a joint application should describe what, if any, division of responsibility for different geographic areas or different roles the co-applicants will use to ensure effective administration of all sub-awards regardless of sub-recipients' geographic location within the United States. See Section 5.A.1, Rating Factor 2. Soundness of Approach in the NOFO.

**13. Will the selected intermediary organization need to provide translation and interpretation services for training and technical assistance activities?**

Yes, the intermediary organization will need to provide translation and interpretation services where needed and feasible in marketing the TEO program to potential sub-recipients and in providing training and technical assistance to sub-recipients. Sub-recipients may include translation and interpretation costs in their sub-award budgets for their program activities as needed.

**Eligible Activities:**

**14. Does the TEO program make small business loans?**

No. No loan funding is available through the TEO program.

**15. Is assistance with evictions, foreclosures, or termination of assistance available through the TEO program?**

No. The TEO program does not provide assistance to individual households experiencing eviction, foreclosure, or termination of assistance. You could consider contacting a HUD Housing Counselor in your local area. Information on how to find a Housing Counseling Agency can be found here: <https://www.hud.gov/counseling>. There may also be a legal aid program or other organization in your area that works on landlord/tenant issues.

**16. Does the TEO program provide legal aid to households on issues of landlord/tenant law?**

No, the TEO program does not provide legal aid to individual households. Sub-recipient tenant organizations may use sub-award funds for legal services to assist with establishing themselves as a non-profit organization. See Section III.F.5. Tenant Education and Outreach (TEO) Sub-Awards under the sub-heading 'Eligible Sub-award Activities' in the NOFO.

**17. Does the TEO program provide service coordination for residents?**

No. TEO sub-award fund supports tenant capacity building for local tenant organizations to help them build the skills to be active partners in problem-solving and preservation at their housing communities. Tenant organizations may connect residents to services and resources available in their communities, but salary and/or benefits for a service coordinator are not allowable expenses in the TEO program.

**18. Are tenant organizations serving Section 202, Section 811, Project Based Voucher properties or public housing eligible to apply for sub-awards?**

No. Only tenant organizations that serve at least 25 units of multifamily housing assisted through the Project Based Rental Assistance Program are eligible for sub-awards. See Section III.A.G. Criteria for Beneficiaries in the NOFO.

**19. Can TEO funding be used to construct or rehabilitate housing, community facilities or commercial properties? Can it be used to acquire real estate?**

No. TEO funding cannot be used to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate housing or any other type of real estate.