

**State of California**  
**Department of Community Services and Development**

**Cal EITC Education and Outreach Grant**

**2017 Cal EITC Education and Outreach Grant**

**Questions and Answers**

**Questions Submitted Through August 25, 2017**

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**1. Q: Will the grantee for the rural areas be required to provide services in all counties listed on the table in Appendix I?**

**A:** No. Grantees applying for the Rural Target Areas are not required to provide services in all counties identified as rural. However, strong applications will include strategies that provide the broadest coverage possible to rural counties.

**2. Q: Are there any specific rural entities or groups that currently serve rural communities that CSD thinks awarded grantees should work with in the targeted area(s)?**

**A:** No. The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) is relying solely on local community organizations to identify partners that will work most effectively in the target area, as indicated on page 11 of the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

**3. Q: May an organization that serves a single rural county apply?**

**A:** Yes. An organization serving a single rural county can apply. However, as noted on page 9 of the NOFA, funded applicants shall make every effort to reach as many rural counties as possible with effective and appropriate outreach methods. Some examples of this might be achieved are through direct activities as well as coordination with community partners. Such partnerships should be included in order to present a more robust application.

**4. Q: What does monthly outcomes reporting resulting from any collaboration with local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites look like and how is it measured?**

**A:** Grantees will work with local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites. The VITA sites' tax software ascertains how many people receiving free tax preparation services claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Such data will assist CSD with evaluating the effectiveness of education and outreach efforts to direct people to local VITA sites.

**5. Q: Will CSD require the specific names of those canvassed? What type of reporting/recordkeeping will be needed specifically for canvassing?**

**A:** No. Specific names or other personally identifying information will not be required. CSD simply requires counts of the number of interactions held.

**6. Q: Can funds be used to provide free tax preparation services through VITA sites?**

**A:** No. Funds may not be used to provide free tax preparation services through VITA sites. However, as indicated on page 5 of the NOFA, awarded grantees must include information in their education and outreach efforts on where no-cost tax preparation assistance is available and how to locate local VITA sites.

**7. Q: Does hosting a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site for over 3 years count as outreach experience?**

**A:** Yes. Hosting a VITA site for over three years may count as experience because of the associated outreach and education activities conducted to the community and partners that informed them of the location and VITA services being offered. As indicated on page 11 of the NOFA, experience includes successfully providing, coordinating, and implementing education and outreach activities that serve low-income populations.

**8. Q: Could awarded grantees that do not have the capability to pay subcontractors before being reimbursed by the CSD receive an advance?**

**A:** No. Advances will not be awarded under this NOFA. As indicated on page 9 of the NOFA, funding will be distributed to awarded grantees on a monthly reimbursement schedule upon receipt of submitted expenditures and progress reports.

**9. Can organizations submit verifiable invoices/work-orders for immediate reimbursement before the work has been completed/started?**

**A:** No. As indicated on page 9 of the NOFA, funding will be distributed to awarded grantees on a monthly reimbursement schedule upon receipt of submitted expenditures and progress reports.

**10. Q: Can subcontractors be added after the application is submitted/grant is awarded?**

**A:** Yes. Subcontractors can be added after the grant is awarded.

**11. Q: Can an applicant list an organization as a subcontractor that is also applying itself for the same target area?**

**A:** Yes. An applicant can list the same organization as a subcontractor that is also applying itself for the same target area.

**12. Q: Are there match funds required? What form(s) can matched funding take beyond cash- staff time, pro bono, etc.?**

**A:** Yes. Match funds are required. As indicated on page 12 of the NOFA, applications must reflect a 50% cost sharing or match of all funds requested. Matching funds can be in the form of “in-kind” contributions or volunteer hours. In addition, organizations can consider utilizing their overhead/administrative costs the same as matching funds. There are no restrictions on the type of funding source used for matching. However, an applicant may not supplant or replace any current funding with funding awarded under this NOFA. Applicants must provide matching activities, formula/calculation and amounts in the Matching Funds Worksheet (CSD 171MF). CSD 171MF is a spreadsheet tab within the 2017 Cal EITC Supplemental Workbook.

**13. Q: Can references be local elected officials, statewide elected officials, Internal Revenue Service Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communications (IRS SPEC) officers, and/or prospective EITC outreach partners?**

**A:** Yes. As indicated on page 12 of the NOFA, the only entities applicants may not list as references are the Department of Community Services and Development and the Franchise Tax Board.

**14. Q: If you plan to apply for multiple target areas, can you list the same references on multiple applications?**

**A:** Yes. Applicants may list the same reference(s) on the References Worksheet (CSD 171Ref) on multiple applications. However, a separate copy of the References Worksheet (CSD 171Ref) must be included with each application.

**15. Q: Can an organization apply for a portion of the statewide target to serve Native Americans? The rural target would not provide enough funding to reach the 110 Tribes throughout the state.**

**A:** No. CSD will not accept partial funding requests on applications. Applications can only be submitted within the allowable minimum and maximum funding amounts as indicated on page 9 of the NOFA. However, applicants are encouraged to include culturally sensitive and diverse outreach approaches to reach those potentially eligible for the credits.

**16. Q: If you apply for Target Area 12 (Statewide), is the minimum amount you can apply for is \$230,000?**

**A:** Yes. The contract award ranges for Target Area 12 (Statewide) are from a minimum of \$230,000 to a maximum of \$410,000. As indicated on page 10 of the NOFA, CSD has the option of making an award to one or two organizations for Target Area 12 (Statewide).

**17. Q: Are there requirements to use Cal EITC logo or materials?**

**A:** No. There is no requirement to use CalEITC4Me logo or materials. However, as indicated on page 5 of the NOFA, efforts should be made to use uniform messaging statewide and meet all the minimum elements. CSD discourages creating new collateral materials since a wide variety of collateral materials are available. For example, awarded grantees may obtain free California EITC (Cal EITC) brochures and posters from the Franchise Tax Board. CSD requests that grantees use existing messaging that has already been created and vetted to ensure its effectiveness with the target audience.

**18. Q: Can a grantee hire someone to specifically handle the education and outreach efforts for Cal EITC? If so, do staff costs need to include hourly rates and number of hours? Where and how do applicants propose that labor in the Budget Detail Form (CSD 171B)?**

**A:** Yes. Grantees may hire staff to specifically handle the education and outreach efforts for Cal EITC. Staff costs for education and outreach activities are both anticipated and allowed. However, organizations are asked to limit staff costs for administrative functions and overhead. Applicants should indicate staff costs based on outreach and education activities provided, as outlined in the Budget Detail Form (CSD 171B). Applicants do not need to include hourly rates and number of hours, but rather those activities to be conducted under each applicable outreach and education budget line item. For example, if staff time will be dedicated to posting to social media, indicate that on the Budget Detail Form (CSD 171B) under Social Media. Another example would be if staff time will be spent training volunteers to canvass and/or canvassing themselves. This would be indicated under the Canvassing category of the Budget Detail Form (CSD 171B).

**19. Q: Is there a standard indirect cost amount?**

**A:** No. There is not a standard indirect cost amount. However, as indicated on page 10 of the NOFA, costs are to be allocated for outreach and education activities and are not intended to support organizational overhead. Considering the limited amount of grant funds available, applicants should make every effort possible to minimize overhead and/or administrative costs and target available funding towards providing direct services for eligible Californians.

**20. Q: On the NOFA pages 14-15, the numbering convention goes from goes from #4 to #6. Is #5 missing or is there no #5?**

**A:** No. Number 5 is not missing. This is a mistake in the numbering convention. CSD corrected the error and uploaded a corrected NOFA to <http://www.csd.ca.gov/Resources/ContractingOpportunities.aspx>.

**21. Q: Are door-to-door outreach and texting the only allowed canvassing methods? What if a nonprofit partner is doing education/outreach through its existing programs/services in their office on a one-on-one basis?**

**A:** No. Any outreach activity involving one-on-one interactions is considered canvassing. For example, canvassing can also include, but is not limited to: one-on-one phone calls, office visits on a one-on-one basis, and speaking to individuals one-on-one at a career fair.

**22. Q: Will the scoring results be released publicly?**

**A:** No. Scoring results will not be released publicly. However, upon request, CSD can provide feedback to an applicant after awards are granted.

**23. Q: Under canvassing as a required outreach activity, are one-on-one phone calls to potential customers considered a canvassing type activity?**

**A:** Please refer to question #20 of this document.

**24. Q: If an organization was not invited to apply may it still submit an application?**

**A:** Yes. CSD encourages all eligible organizations to apply regardless of invitation as long as it meets the eligibility requirements on page 12 of the NOFA.

**25. Q: Is there a list of awards from last year that applicants can use to potentially network with other agencies that may be applying for funds?**

**A:** Yes. Please visit <http://www.csd.ca.gov/Resources/ContractingOpportunities.aspx> and click on the link under "Closed Bids and Proposals."

**26. Q: Is there minimum insurance required? If so, what are the specific requirements?**

**A:** Yes. Insurance requirements include workers' compensation, fidelity bond, general liability, vehicle, and self-insurance (if a grantee is a self-insured governmental entity). Below is the language from the 2017 Cal EITC Contract, detailing insurance requirements:

### **5.3 Insurance Requirements**

- A. By execution of this Agreement, Grantee agrees that the below-required insurance policies and bond shall be in effect at all times during the term of this Agreement.
- B. Grantee shall provide CSD with written notice at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to cancellation or reduction of insurance coverage to an amount less than that required in this Agreement.
- C. In the event said insurance coverage expires at any time or times during the term of this Agreement, Grantee agrees to provide within thirty (30) calendar days prior to said expiration date, a new Certificate of Insurance (ACORD 25) evidencing insurance coverage as provided for herein for not less than the remainder of the term of this Agreement. The Certificate shall identify and name CSD as the Certificate Holder.
- D. New Certificates of Insurance will be reviewed for content and form by CSD.
- E. In the event Grantee fails to maintain in effect at all times the specified insurance and bond coverage as herein provided, CSD may, in addition to any other available remedies it may have, suspend this Agreement.
- F. With the exception of workers' compensation and fidelity bond, CSD shall be named as additional insured on all Certificates of Insurance required under this Agreement.
- G. The issuance of other CSD contracts, to include any cash advances and reimbursement payments, to the Grantee shall be contingent upon required current insurance coverage being on file at CSD for this Agreement.
- H. Should Grantee utilize a subcontractor (s) to provide Education and Outreach Activities under this Agreement, Grantee shall indemnify and hold the State harmless against any liability incurred by that subcontractor (s).

### **5.4 Specific Insurance Requirements**

- A. Self-Insurance
  - 1. When Grantee is a self-insured governmental entity, CSD, upon satisfactory proof, may waive the appropriate insurance requirements. To qualify for a waiver, an appropriate county or city risk manager shall sign a certification that shall contain assurance of the adequacy of the governmental entity's ability to cover any potential losses under this Agreement.
  - 2. Grantee shall specify in writing a list of which coverage(s) will be self-insured under this Agreement and shall list all applicable policy numbers, expiration dates, and coverage amounts.
  - 3. In the event that the Grantee's self-insurance coverage does not contain any changes from the prior year, CSD will accept a certified letter signed by authorized personnel stating that no changes have occurred from last year. This letter is due at the time of Agreement execution or within thirty (30) days of expiration of insurance.
  - 4. In lieu of providing certification of self-insurance, Grantee may provide proof of excess insurance coverage through an insurance carrier who is licensed to underwrite insurance in the State of California.

**B. Workers' Compensation Insurance**

1. Grantee shall have and maintain for the term of this Agreement workers' compensation insurance issued by an insurance carrier licensed to underwrite workers' compensation insurance in the State of California.
2. Grantee shall submit either an applicable Certificate of Insurance or a Certificate of Consent to Self-Insure issued by the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations to CSD as evidence of compliance with the workers' compensation insurance requirement prior to issuance of an initial cash advance.

**C. Commercial or Government Crime Coverage (Fidelity Bond)**

1. Grantee shall maintain a commercial crime policy. If Grantee is a public entity, Grantee shall maintain a government crime policy. The commercial crime policy or government crime policy (hereinafter "fidelity bond") shall include the following coverages or their substantial equivalents: Employee Dishonesty/Theft, Forgery or Alteration, and Computer Fraud.
2. Grantee's fidelity bond coverage limits shall not be less than a minimum amount of four percent (4%) of the total amount of consideration set forth under this Agreement.
3. Grantee shall submit an applicable Certificate of Insurance (ACORD 25) to CSD as evidence of compliance with the fidelity bond requirement prior to issuance of an initial cash advance.

**D. General Liability Insurance**

1. Grantee shall have and maintain for the term of this Agreement general liability and property damage insurance for a combined single limit of not less than \$500,000 per occurrence.
2. Grantee shall submit to CSD an applicable Certificate of Insurance naming CSD as an additional insured, as evidence of compliance with the general liability insurance requirement prior to issuance of an initial cash advance.

**E. Vehicle Insurance**

1. Grantee shall have and maintain for the term of this Agreement vehicle insurance in the amount of \$500,000 for each person and each accident for bodily injury and in the amount of \$500,000 for each person and each accident for property damage.
2. When employees use their own vehicles to perform duties within the scope of their employment, Grantee shall have and maintain for the term of this Agreement non-owned and hired automobile liability insurance in the amount of \$500,000 for each person and each accident for bodily injury and \$500,000 for each person and each accident for property damage (Driving to and from work is not within the scope of employment.).
3. Grantee shall submit to CSD an applicable Certificate of Insurance naming CSD as an additional insured as evidence of compliance with the vehicle insurance requirement prior to issuance of an initial cash advance.

**27. Q: Although administration costs are set to a "minimum" dollar amount in the grant, what is the actual percentage or dollar amount allowable for administration cost with a grant award of \$300,000 in the Los Angeles area?**

**A:** Please refer to question #18 of this document.

**28. Q: What is the minimum insurance amount required? What specific requirements?**

**A:** Please refer to question #25 of this document.

**29. Q: Under "Canvassing" as a required outreach activity, are one on one phone calls to potential customers considered a canvassing type activity?**

**A:** Please refer to question #22 of this document.

**30. Q: Would there be a prepayment system option for organizations that do not have the capability to pay subcontractors before being reimbursed by CSD? Can organizations submit verifiable invoices/work-orders for immediate reimbursement before the work has been completed/started?**

**A:** Please refer to question #8 of this document.

**31. Q: Can we provide outreach to community residents in areas (especially rural areas) not intended in the zip codes set aside our county?**

**A:** Yes. Applicants are not limited to targeting only those zip codes provided in *Appendix I-Maps of Target Areas 1-11*. However, applicants are encouraged to target education and outreach activities to include the identified zip codes. Targeting education and outreach activities in the identified zip codes should assist with increasing filings in the specified areas.

**32. Q: Are rural areas eligible for the Target Area 11 (Rural Counties) funding if they are part of the top 10 counties?**

**A:** No. Counties are deemed rural only when their total population is less than 100,000. CSD utilized the rural definition from the California State Association of Counties.

**33. Q: Page 4 of the NOFA indicates to target eligible Californians using the 2016 income limits. However, shouldn't grantees target eligible Californians under the new 2017 tax year income limits?**

**A:** No. As indicated on page 4 of the NOFA, target individuals and families with incomes at or below the Cal EITC filing requirement based on the income limits established for the 2016 tax year. However, California increased Cal EITC income limits for a family of two or more qualifying children to \$22,300 and enabled self-employed workers to claim Cal EITC as well. Grantees should indicate: 1) how they will target using the 2016 income limits; and 2) reach these newly eligible Californians. According to a report released by the California Budget and Policy Center, these changes could extend the credit to well over 1 million additional low-income working families beginning in tax year 2017. For additional context on these changes will benefit California, please visit (<http://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/expanded-caleitc-major-advance-working-families/>), which is the report. CSD will notify awardees once final income eligibility threshold specifics have been released.

**34. Q: The NOFA indicates that volunteer hours can be used as a match. Does this include volunteer hours used to prepare taxes at VITA sites? Or is it restricted to just volunteer hours used on outreach and education activities?**

**A:** Yes. Volunteers assisting with VITA (for example: greeters, tax preparers, and site coordinators)) may be considered as eligible for volunteer hours for matching purposes. As indicated on page 13 of the NOFA, occupation and wage estimates can be found at [http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4\\_541200.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_541200.htm). An example may include basing hourly wages for tax preparation using the occupation title "Tax Preparers." However, this is only an example as activities will vary among applicants. CSD recommends using the most appropriate category for the specific funded activities.

**35. Q: On page 6, in section 6. Education and Outreach Activities, the NOFA lists Web as a required activity and specifically states "create an EITC-specific website." Can this be a webpage?**

**A:** Yes. The webpage must have its own Unique Record Locator (URL) and awarded grantees must be able to track webpage hits to the specific URL, not just the organization's general website.

**36. Q: I understand this funding cannot supplant any existing funding, and the funds should be spent on new activities. Does this requirement include activities paid for with grant funds received last year? For example, if a grantee received the 2016 Cal EITC Education and Outreach Grant and paid for Univision advertisements, can the same organization applying this year propose purchasing new advertisements with Univision if awarded?**

**A:** No. Activities funded by the 2016 Cal EITC Education and Outreach Grant are not considered activities funded by “existing funding sources” for the purposes of this NOFA. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that Cal EITC grant funds are not used to supplant existing efforts that organizations had the capacity to fund through other sources prior to the creation of the grant.

**37. Q: In reference to question #33, if an application was focused on newly eligible Californians, would that disqualify an applicant? We expect our approach to cross over to others that qualify as well.**

**A:** Selected grantees are expected to provide outreach to newly eligible Californians, as well as others that may qualify. Please see page 5 of the NOFA for required education and outreach messaging elements.

**38. Q: Do match fund activities need to be included in the Scope of Work if they are exclusively being funded by match funds and not state money?**

**A:** No. Activities supported by match funds should not be included in the Scope of Work. Only activities funded in whole or in part by the proposed Cal EITC grant should be included in the Scope of Work.