

USCIS Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Program Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services

Important Guidance for Preparing Your Proposal

Use the following information to help you prepare a high-quality proposal for the FY 2017 *Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Program: Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services* funding opportunity. For a full description of the requirements, please review the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

In the “Citizenship Instruction Program” section of the project narrative:

- ✓ Differentiate the lawful permanent resident population you serve from other immigrant populations in the area.
- ✓ Explain how the proposed number of students to be served under the grant-funded program is feasible based on your organization’s experience, past performance, and the proposed budget. Provide the number of lawful permanent residents that you will serve with grant funds.
- ✓ Discuss your organization’s experience with citizenship instruction, if applicable, and experience with English as a Second Language (ESL).
- ✓ Make sure the curriculum includes the U.S. history, government, and English content required to pass the naturalization interview and test. Each grant-funded class must integrate instruction in U.S. history and government; ESL instruction in reading, writing, and speaking; as well as instruction on the naturalization process and eligibility interview.
- ✓ Proposed textbooks and materials should cover content related to adult citizenship preparation, reflect the most recent version of the naturalization test, and be at the appropriate English proficiency level for the class.
- ✓ Discuss the assessment process and your organization’s experience administering nationally normed standardized tests that will be used for the program to assess English language proficiency. In addition, please discuss non-standardized assessments (such as quizzes, unit tests, etc.) that are used to monitor student learning during the course for each class level.
- ✓ Successful citizenship instruction programs offer more than one class level to meet the different instructional needs of students. If you are offering a multi-level class, be sure to explain how the different levels will be managed within the class, including how volunteers will be used (volunteers must be managed by a paid lead teacher or a paid education program coordinator).
- ✓ The citizenship instruction program should have a paid program coordinator who is qualified to manage and oversee an education program.
- ✓ Résumés should include dates for each position listed, schools attended, and degrees received.
- ✓ The staff structure should not be *solely* volunteer-based.
- ✓ Use charts to provide information about program staff.

In the “Naturalization Application Services Program” section of the project narrative:

- ✓ Differentiate the lawful permanent resident population you serve from other immigrant populations in the area.

- ✓ Describe your organization’s experience with naturalization application services, not just general immigration services.
- ✓ Explain how the proposed number of naturalization clients to be served under the grant-funded program is feasible based on your organization’s experience, past performance, and the proposed budget. Provide the number of lawful permanent residents that you will serve with grant funds.
- ✓ Keep in mind that staff members should not provide naturalization representation or legal advice if they do not have the qualifications to do so. For more information, see the definitions for “representation,” “practice,” and “preparation.”
- ✓ Be sure to sufficiently staff the program with employed licensed attorneys or DOJ-accredited representatives or make sure to explain how volunteers authorized to practice immigration law will supplement the naturalization application services provided by your organization’s employees. Only authorized individuals may provide legal advice; review and file Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, with an accompanying Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative; and represent clients before USCIS at the naturalization interview.
- ✓ Résumés should include dates for each position listed, schools attended, degrees or licenses received, and bar admissions.
- ✓ Use charts to provide information about program staff.
- ✓ The staff structure should not be *solely* volunteer-based.

In the “Program Administration” subsections of the project narrative:

- ✓ Congress requires that only lawful permanent residents receive services under this grant program. Describe the internal process you will use to ensure that only lawful permanent residents receive grant-funded services.
- ✓ The outreach plan should use a variety of outreach strategies and should not rely solely on media advertising.

In the “Integration of Services” section of the project narrative:

- ✓ This section applies to all applicants, regardless of whether you work with a sub-awardee organization or not. Describe how the citizenship instruction and naturalization application services programs will work together to implement the grant project.
- ✓ Consider how a lawful permanent resident will be able to complete the naturalization process from start to finish using your proposal’s services and how you will help this individual access both types of services.
- ✓ If you plan to work with a sub-awardee organization, explain how you intend to make the partnership successful.

In the program goal chart:

- ✓ Adapt your goals for student enrollment, eligibility screenings, and naturalization applications filed to allow for start-up time in the first quarter of the performance period.
- ✓ Adjust your goals to include USCIS processing times for Form N-400, Application for Naturalization. For example, it is unlikely that any naturalization will occur during the first quarter of the performance period.
- ✓ The proposed goals for each quarter should be realistic and appropriate for the activities described in the project narrative. For example, if you offer fewer classes in the summer,

your goals for Quarter 4 should be lower than other quarters. Proposed goals should accurately reflect the intended program timeline.

In the budget:

- ✓ Include reasonable costs that support and reflect the activities described in the project narrative. The budget should be consistent with the project narrative.
- ✓ Ensure that the budget demonstrates a balance between costs for the citizenship instruction program and costs for the naturalization application services program.
- ✓ Include salaries for a sufficient number of staff members to operate the program. At least some portion of the salaries for key personnel should be charged to the grant. Include a full-time equivalent percentage for each staff person.

Before submitting the application:

- ✓ Ensure that you include all requested items in the application.
- ✓ Carefully proofread the application for spelling or grammatical errors, formatting problems, or any markings from the “track changes” tool.