

2011 REDF SIF Subgrantee Selection Process and Criteria

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated as of July 1, 2011; includes questions from the June 28, 2011 conference call

Introduction

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding REDF's selection process, criteria, and minimum eligibility requirements. This version **includes questions received during the June 28, 2011 public conference call as well as relevant questions received in the previous RFQ round during fall 2010**. For ease of reading, new questions are located at the top of each sub-section and denoted with a triple-star ("***"). This document may be updated periodically based on questions received through the rfq@redf.org email address.

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

1. *****Are employees dependent upon Supplemental Security Income (SSI) considered low income?**

REDF's definition of poverty is defined in the 2011 REDF SIF Subgrantee Selection Guidance for Applicants.

2. **Will REDF consider organizations that serve populations with barriers to employment not specifically listed under the minimum eligibility criteria, such as physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, and language barriers?**

Yes, but only if the population(s) **also** fully meet REDF's target population criteria as listed.

3. **Do we already have to be providing services to REDF's target population in order to be eligible for a subgrant?**

No. However, if you are not already working with REDF's target population, please provide additional information in the RFQ application section entitled "Target Population" regarding any prior experience with the target population, your future plans for working with the target population, and specific characteristics of the population you plan to serve.

Subgrantee Matching Requirements

4. **Can a housing agency use HUD subsidy as matching funds? Would federal funds administered by a city agency be classified as federal or city funding?**

Federal funds **cannot** be used as matching funds. This includes Federal funds administered by a state or city agency. The only exception is certain federal block grant funds as described in footnote 1 of the document “2011 REDF SIF Subgrantee Selection – Guidance for Applicants.”

5. Can Social Innovation Fund subgrantees be funded by two different Social Innovation Fund intermediaries?

Yes, as long as the respective subgrants from each Social Innovation Fund intermediary are used for two different activities. If you intend to apply for more than one SIF subgrant, please indicate that in your application.

6. When are matched funds required to be confirmed?

You are not required to secure the matched funding prior to submitting the application.

7. Is revenue generated from new social enterprises (e.g., social enterprises created using SIF subgrant funds) eligible to be used for the match?

Yes. Please note that REDF will be assessing the likelihood of proposed match fund sources being received. Revenue from a business that does not yet exist may have a high degree of uncertainty.

Use of Funds

.....

8. *Can an organization apply for a 2011 SIF subgrant for an amount less than the \$100,000 minimum?**

No.

9. If selected as a REDF Social Innovation Fund subgrantee:

- **How is the size of the grant determined?**
- **When will the funds become available?**
- **For what activities can the funds be used?**
- **What is the timetable for implementation?**
- **Are the funds dependent on performance or other metrics?**

The details of each subgrant’s disbursement, structure, and use will be defined as part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between REDF and the selected subgrantees. All grant funds must be used for activities associated with social enterprise.

Joint Applications

- 10. ***If a joint venture is proposed, must both applicants be non-profits or can a for-profit organization apply as the lead applicant with a non-profit partner?**

The lead applicant **must** be a non-profit; the partner organization does **not** need to be a non-profit.

- 11. My organization is considering submitting a joint application. What is the difference between a “lead” organization and “partner” organization(s)?**

There are two distinct differences between “lead” and “partner” organization(s):

- The lead organization must meet all of REDF’s minimum eligibility criteria;
- Only the lead organization can receive funds toward the required subgrant match.

Please provide specific details regarding the nature of the relationship between the lead and partner organization(s) in your RFQ application.

- 12. Can single applicants list partners and/or affiliates in their RFQ application, or would that be considered a joint application?**

Only organizations that specify their RFQ application as “joint” will be classified as such. Partners and/or affiliates may be listed in Section II, question 11.

- 13. Will REDF post a participant list from the June 28, 2011 RFQ conference call?**

No.

Selection Process Timing, Deadlines, and Criteria

- 14. ***When will REDF begin selecting subgrantees?**

REDF intends to select 2011 subgrantees by November 2011.

- 15. ***Are all RFQ applications due by 5:00 PM Pacific Time on July 15, 2011? What if I do not meet the deadline?**

Yes. If an RFQ application is not received by the deadline, it will not be reviewed.

- 16. ***How is the 2011 RFQ application different from the 2010 version?**

The two applications are very similar. Several questions were refined for clarity based on applicant feedback. Additionally, REDF has removed the minimum eligibility requirement

for applicants to be employing individuals from certain target counties in California. Instead, REDF has included a preference for employing target individuals from select California counties within the selection criteria, as described in the document “2011 REDF RFQ Subgrantee Selection – Guidance for Applicants”.

17. *Is this an annual process? If so, when is the next application round?**

While it is likely that there will be future opportunities to apply to REDF’s portfolio, no specific plans have been made at this time.

18. *Are you still planning to select up to three subgrantees in this round?**

Yes.

19. *How many applications do you anticipate receiving?**

We do not know.

20. *If the organization is interested in applying and does not have a strong fiscal background, can they submit with a fiscal agent?**

Joint applications are allowed, as described in the guidelines, but please keep in mind that financial strength is an evaluation criterion.

21. *Can NISH and state fees for services be listed as funding sources and would it be considered government funding?**

It is appropriate to list NISH and state fees for services as funding sources. Yes, these count as government funding.

22. *Do you take off points if answers are not the full word allotment suggested per question?**

No. Answers can be shorter than the maximum word allotment. Also please note that applications are not evaluated on a point system.

23. Are any criteria weighed more heavily than others when evaluating a submission?

No.

24. Will REDF consider organizations with a budget of less than \$3 million or greater than \$50 million?

There is no minimum eligibility requirement related to budget size. However, as stated in the selection criteria, REDF has a preference for organizations with a budget size between \$3 million and \$50 million.

25. My organization's budget size has not required an independent audit to-date. Am I still eligible to apply?

For a RFQ application to be considered complete, REDF requires an organization's audited financial statements for each of its past three fiscal years.

26. My organization's 2010 IRS Form 990 and/or audited financial statements will not be available until after the July 15, 2010 deadline. What should I do?

If your organization's 2010 IRS Form 990 and/or audited financial statements will not be available by the RFQ deadline, please submit the *three most recent years of financial information available* (i.e., 2007, 2008, and 2009). REDF may request updated financial information at a later date.

27. If my organization has already participated in a trial project with REDF, will we have to participate in an additional one? If my organization has ever worked with REDF, do we have to submit an RFQ application?

All applicants, regardless of their current or previous relationship with REDF, must submit a complete RFQ application in order to be considered for a SIF subgrant. Organizations that have previously completed a trial project with REDF may not need to complete another trial project with REDF, but still need to submit an RFQ application.

Social Enterprise and Job Training Experience

.....

Please note the questions covered in this section pertain to RFQ Section V ("Social Enterprise and Job Training Experience").

28. *Can revenue generated by the social enterprise be federal in nature i.e. Ticket to Work fees from the Social Security Administration (SSA)?**

In your application, you should specify all forms of revenue generated by the social enterprise. Please note that federal funds cannot be used to fulfill the SIF match funding requirement.

29. *Can REDF funding be used to start a new social enterprise? Do you have a preference for existing social enterprises versus startups?**

Yes, REDF funding can be used to start a new social enterprise. REDF does not have a preference for existing versus new social enterprises; we are looking for social enterprise concepts that employ the target population, have job growth potential, and are sustainable long-term.

30. *Can SIF subgrant funds be used to cover the cost of planning for a new social enterprise (e.g., strategic planning)?**

SIF subgrant funds cannot be used exclusively for strategic planning activities, but some of the funds can be used for this purpose.

31. *Must the target population be employed exclusively by the organization applying for a SIF subgrant and/or its partner in the case of a “joint” application?**

Yes. For the purpose of a REDF SIF subgrant, an applicant and/or its partner must provide employment through a social enterprise it owns and operates.

32. *If we train and/or employ target population members, but do not pay a salary (provide only supportive services), are we still qualified as a social enterprise?**

REDF’s definition of social enterprise includes paying the target population employees at least minimum wage.

33. *Must the social enterprise generate organizational revenue or may it generate revenue for our clients? For example, entrepreneurial training leading to small business development for self-employment purposes.**

Earned income must flow through the non-profit social enterprise. Self-owned businesses do not count.

34. *What is the volume of job creation you are seeking to achieve?**

We do not specify job creation volume per se for this application. We are looking for social enterprises with potential for impact and scale. Please specify in your application the employment potential of your social enterprise(s).

35. My organization earns income by selling goods or services. For Section V, part 1, question 3¹ should we include individuals who manage these activities and are members of our target population?

Yes. Please be sure to specify details in your RFQ application.

36. Does Section V, part 2, question 3² refer to permanent positions set aside in the social enterprise or positions set aside in the organization that oversees these activities?

Both. For example, if your organization **and** its associated social enterprise **both** set aside permanent positions for your target population please sum the values and specify the details in your RFQ application.

¹ Section V, part 1, question 3 states “How many full-time employees are involved in managing or operating these activities?”

² Section V, part 2, question 3 states “How many, if any, permanent positions are set aside for employing the organizations target population?”

37. For Section V, part 3,³ can job training and/or job placement services also include hiring target population individuals into my organization or its associated social enterprise?

Yes. For this particular RFQ sub-section REDF is seeking to understand the total number of target population individuals trained and/or placed in jobs by your organization regardless of who did the hiring or where the jobs are located. Questions regarding paid employment to your organization's target population are asked in Section V, part 2.⁴

Evidence and Evaluation

.....

Please note the questions covered in this section pertain to RFQ Section VII ("Measurement and Evaluation Experience").

38. *When discussing the evidence-based outcomes, is this for our agency as a whole or only for the vocational program?**

Either, or both. Please feel free to discuss examples of evidence-based outcomes you believe are most relevant.

39. *If the project submitted is one that is replicated and we have data from an existing program in another community, is that appropriate to discuss?**

Yes; please use specific example(s) that you believe best demonstrates your organization's experience with data collection, evaluation, and/or an evidence-based approach.

40. For Section VII, can my organization use one existing program as an example to describe its data gathering, measurement, evidence, and evaluation experience?

Yes. We encourage you to use your best example(s) to demonstrate your organization's experience, if any, in each area.

41. How much time would our staff need to allocate to assist in the rigorous evaluation process that REDF plans on implementing?

We are not able to estimate the time required for this activity. The evaluation design will be developed and established over the coming months.

42. Can my organization still submit a RFQ application if we have minimal experience with outcomes measurement, evidence and/or evaluation?

³ Section V, part 3 states "Does the organization provide job training and/or job placement services?"
⁴ Section V, part 2 states "Does the organization provide paid employment to its target population?"

REDF does not require previous experience with outcomes measurement, evidence and/or evaluation in order to be eligible to submit an application.