

focus on solvency and reform. The discussion and research proposed must address at least three priority research areas. Applicants will generally receive higher scores for addressing more than three priority research areas. However, a strong proposal focusing on three areas will outscore one that is broad and weakly defined. Applicants with additional insightful research proposals will also score higher. Concise plans for research projects in the near term (one or two years) as well as a five-year agenda are important.

Reviewers will rate applications on the contents of the plans to conduct policy relevant research. In addition, they will be judged on their relevance to Agency activities. Reviewers will also take into consideration SSA priorities and funded or anticipated projects. SSA is particularly interested in research on issues related to Social Security solvency and reform.

(c) Dissemination; training and education. (See Part III, Section A-3, A-4, and A-5) (20 points)

Reviewers will evaluate strategies for dissemination of research and other related information to a broad and disparate set of academic, research, and policy communities as well as to the public. Reviewers will also evaluate whether the appropriate dissemination method is being proposed for targeted audiences of academics and researchers, policymakers, and the public. Proposed strategies that increase dissemination across Centers and other organizations conducting retirement research will also receive higher ratings.

The evaluation of the training and evaluation prospectus will include an assessment of plans to enhance the training of graduate students and young scholars through direct financial support as well as exposure to policy research. In addition, reviewers will evaluate proposed strategies for educating and training policymakers and practitioners on issues of retirement.

(d) Quality of the staffing proposal and proposed administration. (See Part III, Section A-6 and A-7) (20 points)

Reviewers will judge the applicant's Center Director and staff on research experience, demonstrated research skills, administrative skills, public administration experience, and relevant policy making skills. An additional criterion will be the Center's demonstrated potential to act as a conduit between basic and applied behavioral and social science research and policy analysis/evaluation. Both the evidence of past involvement in related research and the specific plans for seeking applied outcomes described in

the application shall be considered part of that potential. Reviewers may consider references from grant/cooperative agreement administrators on previous grants and cooperative agreements held by the proposed Center Director or other key personnel. Director and staff time commitments to the Center also will be a factor in evaluation. Whether the applicant can maintain a single location for research, teaching, and scholarship is an important consideration. Reviewers will evaluate the affiliations of proposed key personnel to ensure the required multidisciplinary nature of the Consortium is being fulfilled.

Applicants will be judged on the nature and extent of the organizational support for research, mentoring scholars, dissemination, and in areas related to the Center's central priorities and this request. Reviewers will evaluate the commitment of the host institution (and the proposed institutional unit that will contain the Center) to assess its ability to support all three of the Center's major activities: (1) Research, evaluation, and data development; (2) dissemination; (3) education and training. Reviewers also will evaluate the applicant's demonstrated capacity to work with a range of government agencies.

(e) Appropriateness of the budget for carrying out the planned staffing and activities. See Part III, (Section A-8) (10 points)

Reviewers will consider whether (1) the budget assures an efficient and effective allocation of funds to achieve the objectives of this solicitation, and (2) the applicant has additional funding from other sources, in particular, the host institution. Applications which show funding from other sources that supplement funds from this cooperative agreement will be given higher marks than those without financial support. Awardees are required to contribute a minimum of 5 percent cost share of total project costs.

Panel Recommendations. Once each application is scored and ranked, the panel will then review the top applicants and recommend Centers that together best address the range of responsibilities described in Part II.

Part IV—Application Forms, Completion and Submission

A. Availability of Application Forms

The application kit, which contains the prescribed forms for funding projects under this announcement, is available at www.ssa.gov/oag/. To request an application kit for those without Internet access, contact: David

Allshouse, Grants Management Officer, SSA, Office of Acquisition and Grants, Grants Management Team, 1-E-4 Gwynn Oak Building, 1710 Gwynn Oak Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21207-5279. The fax number is (410) 966-9310. The telephone number for David Allshouse is (410) 965-9262 (e-mail: dave.allshouse@ssa.gov).

When requesting an application kit, the applicant should refer to the program announcement number SSA-ORES-03-01 and the date of this announcement to ensure receipt of the proper application kit.

B. Components of a Complete Application

A complete application package consists of one original, signed and dated application, plus at least two copies, which include the following items in order:

1. Cover Sheet;
2. Project Abstract/Summary (not to exceed three pages);
3. Table of Contents;
4. Part I (Face Sheet)—Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424);
5. Part II—Budget Information—Sections A through G (Form SSA-96-BK);
6. Budget Justification for Section B—Budget Categories;
7. Proof of non-profit status, if applicable;
8. Copy of the applicant's approved indirect cost rate agreement, if appropriate;
9. Part III—Project (Program) Narrative. Please disregard instructions provided on pages 3, 4, and 5 of the SSA Federal Assistance Application Form SSA-96-BK. The program narrative should be organized in six sections:
 - (a) Background Analysis,
 - (b) Research, Evaluation, and Data Development Prospectus,
 - (c) Dissemination Prospectus,
 - (d) Training and Education Prospectus,
 - (e) Staffing Proposal Including Staff Utilization, Staff Background, and Organizational Experience,
 - (f) Budget Narrative.
10. Part IV—Assurances;
11. Required Certifications;
12. Any appendices/attachments; and
13. Supplement to Section II—Key Personnel.

Staple each copy of the application securely (front and back if necessary) in the upper left corner. Please DO NOT use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, books, brochures, videos, or any other items that cannot be readily photocopied.