

recommendation and comments of ANA staff, State and Federal agencies having contract and grant performance related information, and other interested parties. The Commissioner makes grant awards consistent with the purpose of the Act, all relevant statutory and requires this program announcement, and the availability of funds.

Incomplete applications and applications that do not conform to this announcement will not be accepted for review. Applicants will be notified in writing of any such determination by ACF. An incomplete application is one that is:

- Missing Standard Form (SF) 424.
- Does not have an authorized signature on the SF 424. The application's Standard Form 424 must be signed by an individual authorized (1) to act for the applicant Tribe or organization, and (2) to assume the applicant's obligations under the terms and conditions of the grant award, including Native American Program statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Does not include proof of non-profit status, if applicable.

Complete applications that conform to all the requirements of this program announcement are subjected to a competitive review and evaluation process. Independent review panels consisting of reviewers familiar with American Indian Tribes and Native American communities and organizations, and Native American languages evaluate each application using the published criteria in this announcement. As a result of the review, a normalized numerical score will be assigned to each application.

Each Tribe, Native American organization, or other eligible applicant may compete for one grant award under this program announcement.

The Administration for Native Americans will accept only one application for this program announcement from any one applicant. If an eligible applicant sends in two applications for this program announcement, the one with the earlier postmark will be accepted for review unless the applicant withdraw the earlier application.

Successful applicants are notified through an official Financial Assistance Award (FAA) document. The FAA will state the amount of Federal funds awarded, the purpose of the grant, the terms and conditions of the grant award, the effective date of the award, the project period, the budget period, and the amount of the non-ACF matching share requirement.

#### F. The Review Process

##### 1. Initial Application Review

Applications submitted by the closing date and verified by the postmark will undergo a pre-review of determine that:

- The applicant is eligible in accordance with the Eligible Applicants Section of this announcement; and,
- The application is signed by an authorized representative; and
- Submitted by the deadline; and
- The application narrative, forms and materials submitted are adequate to allow the review panel to undertake an in depth evaluation and the project described is an allowable type. (All required materials and forms are listed in the Grant Application Checklist in the Application Kit).

Application subjected to the pre-review described above which fail to satisfy one or more of the listed requirements will be considered ineligible and excluded from competitive evaluation.

##### 2. Competitive Review of Accepted Applications

Applications which pass the pre-review will be evaluated and rated by an independent review panel on the basis of the specific evaluation criteria listed in Section G: Review Criteria. The criteria are used to evaluate the quality of a proposed project, and to determine the likelihood of its success. Projects will not be ranked based on general financial need.

ANA staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official notification to the applicants.

After the Commissioner has made decisions on all applicants funded with fiscal year 2003 funds, unsuccessful applicants are notified in writing within 30 days. The notification will be accompanied by a panel review summary including recommendations for improving the application.

##### 3. Appeal of Ineligibility

Applicants, who are initially excluded from competitive evaluation because of ineligibility, may appeal the ANA decision of their ineligibility. Likewise, applicants may also appeal an ANA decision that their proposed activities are ineligible for funding consideration. The appeals process is stated in the final rule published in the **Federal Register** on August 19, 1996 (61 FR 42817).

#### G. General Guidance to Applicants

*Application Kit:* (OMB approved, control number 0980-0204, expires April 30, 2003). The application kit

contains the necessary forms and instructions to apply for a grant under this program announcement.

Application kits may be obtained from ANA Training and Technical Assistance (t/TA) providers.

##### *Training and Technical Assistance:*

ANA employs contractors to provide short-term training and technical assistance to eligible applicants. T/TA is available under these contracts for a wide range of needs however, the contractors are not authorized to write applications. The T/TA is provided at no cost to the eligible entity. To obtain an application kit and/or, training and technical assistance, applicants are encouraged to contact the T/TA provider within the appropriate service area. To locate the T/TA provider currently serving the region you are located in you may call the ANA Help Desk at 1-877-922-9262; or visit the ANA web site at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ana/>.

The following information is provided to assist applicants in developing a competitive application.

##### 1. Program Guidance

- The Administration for Native Americans funds projects that demonstrate the strongest prospects for addressing the stated purposes of this program announcement.

- In discussing the goals, strategy, and problems being addressed in the application, include sufficient background and/or history of the community concerning these issues and/or progress to date, as well as the size of the population to be served. This material will assist the reviewers in determining the appropriateness and potential benefits of the proposed project.

- In the discussion of community-based, long-range goals, non-Federally recognized and off-reservation groups are encouraged to include a description of what constitute their specific "community".

- Applications from National Indian and Native American organizations must demonstrate a need for the project, explain how the project was originated, state who the intended beneficiaries will be, and describe how the recipients will actually benefit from the project.

- Applicants must document the community's support for the proposed project and explain the role of the community in the planning process and implementation of the proposed project. For Tribes, a current signed resolution from the governing body of the Tribe supporting the project proposal stating that there has been community involvement in the planning of this