

select applications out of rank order to achieve balance among the topics selected for funding.

(D) *Rating Factors.* The factors for rating and ranking applicants, and maximum points for each factor, are provided below. The maximum number of points to be awarded is 100.

Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Experience (30 Points)

Points will be awarded under the following three sub-factors, based on the extent to which your proposal indicates that you have the ability and organizational resources necessary to implement successfully your proposed activities in a timely manner. The rating of you, the "applicant," will include any sub-recipients that will contribute resources to the project. In rating this factor, HUD will consider and award points based on the extent to which your application demonstrates:

(1) *That the principal investigator and key personnel are capable and qualified to accomplish the proposed research, based on their education/training and previous completed research.* (15 points.) Qualifications to carry out the proposed study will be evaluated based on the academic background of personnel, relevant publications, and recent (within the past 10 years) research experience relevant to the type of work proposed. Publications and research experience are considered relevant if they required the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills that can be applied in the planning and execution of the technical study that is proposed.

(2) *That the project manager(s) have demonstrated ability to manage this research, based on past performance in managing similar projects.* (10 points.) Points will be awarded based on demonstrated ability to successfully manage your study in such areas as personnel management, project management, data management, quality control, community study involvement (if applicable), and report writing, as well as overall success in project completion (i.e., projects completed on time and within budget). You should also demonstrate that your project would have adequate administrative support, including clerical and specialized support in areas such as accounting and equipment maintenance, as relevant.

(3) *That the primary applicant and any sub-recipients are capable of managing project funds, based on past performance.* (5 points.) Points will be awarded based on the extent of demonstrated ability to account for

funds appropriately as well as on timely use of funds received either from HUD or from other Federal, state, or local programs, or private programs. HUD may consider information at hand or available from public sources such as, but not limited to, newspapers, Inspector General or Government Accounting Office Reports or Findings, and/or hotline complaints that have been proven to have merit.

Rating Factor 2: Need/Extent of the Problem (10 Points)

Points will be awarded based on the extent to which your proposal establishes that your proposed research will address documented problems, target areas or target groups. In responding to this factor, you should document in detail how your project would make a significant contribution towards achieving some or all of HUD's stated goals and objectives for one or more of the topic areas described in section III (A).

Rating Factor 3: Soundness of Technical Study Approach (50 Points)

Points will be awarded based on the quality of the technical study plan portion of your application, under the following four sub-factors. Specific components that will be evaluated include the following:

(1) *Soundness of the study design.* (30 points.) The thoroughness and feasibility of your project description/study design, and the extent to which it reflects a comprehensive understanding of the relevant technical literature. It should clearly describe how your study builds upon the current state of knowledge for your focus area. If possible, your study should be designed to address testable hypotheses, which are clearly stated. Your study design should be statistically based, with sufficient data to provide an adequate test of your stated hypotheses. The study design should be presented as a logical sequence of steps or phases, with individual activities or tasks described for each. You should identify any important "decision points" in your study plan, and you should discuss plans for data management, analysis and archiving.

(2) *Quality assurance mechanisms.* (10 points.) The adequacy of quality assurance mechanisms that will be integrated into your project design to ensure the validity and quality of the results. Areas to be addressed include acceptance criteria for data quality, procedures for selection of samples/sample sites, sample handling, measurement and analysis, and any standard/nonstandard quality

assurance/control procedures to be followed. Documents (e.g., government reports, peer-reviewed academic literature) that provide the basis for your quality assurance mechanisms should be cited.

(3) *Project management plan.* (8 points.) The extent to which your schedule for the completion of major activities, tasks and deliverables, and your budget, confirm that there will be adequate resources (e.g., personnel, financial) to carry out your study design successfully within the proposed time frame, taking account of timing requirements stated in section IV, above.

(4) *Budget proposal.* (2 Points) Two points will be awarded if your budget proposal on the HUD-424CB thoroughly estimates all applicable direct and indirect costs and is presented in a clear and coherent format as provided in section VI (B). One point, or no point, will be awarded if your budget proposal is deficient in these regards, based on the degree of deficiency.

Rating Factor 4: Leveraging of Resources (5 Points)

You are encouraged to demonstrate that the effectiveness of HUD's funds will be increased by securing other public and/or private resources or by structuring the project in a cost-effective manner, such as integrating the project into an existing study. Resources may include funding or in-kind contributions (such as services, facilities or equipment) allocated to the purpose(s) of your project. Staff and in-kind contributions should be given a monetary value. Larger commitments of this kind will be awarded more points under this rating factor.

You should provide evidence of leveraging/partnerships by attaching to your application letters of firm commitment, memoranda of understanding, or agreements to participate from those entities identified as partners in the project efforts. Each letter of commitment, memorandum of understanding, or agreement to participate must include the organization's name, proposed level of commitment (with monetary value) and responsibilities as they relate to specific activities or tasks of your proposed program. The commitment must also be signed by an official of the organization legally able to make commitments on behalf of the organization.

Rating Factor 5: Coordination, Self-Sufficiency and Sustainability (5 Points)

(1) The extent to which you have coordinated your activities with other organizations that have been or are in