

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-4859-N-01]

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the HUD Urban Scholars Fellowship Program

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, HUD.

ACTION: Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

SUMMARY: *Purpose of the Program.* To provide encouragement to new scholars to undertake research now, and throughout their careers, on topics of interest to HUD.

Available Funds. Approximately \$550,000 from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, Division K, has been set aside to fund grants under this NOFA.

Eligible Applicants: Ph.D. recipients who have an academic appointment at an institution of higher education and have received their Ph.D. degrees no earlier than January 1, 1998.

Application Deadline. **December 17, 2003.**

Match. University support in terms of course load reductions, indirect costs waived, space, *etc.* is required.

Additional Information

I. Application Due Date

Your completed application must be received on or before December 17, 2003, based on the following submission requirements.

Address for Submitting Applications. Your completed application consists of an original signed application and one copy. Submit your completed application to the following address: The Fellowship Office/HUD GR 346A, National Research Council, 500 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20001-2736. Only one application per applicant will be accepted.

For Further Information and Technical Assistance. You may contact the National Research Council (NRC) by telephone: (202) 334-2872; fax: (202) 334-3419 (these are not toll-free numbers); or email: infofell@nas.edu.

II. Amount Allocated

Approximately \$550,000 made available from the FY 2003 Consolidated Appropriations Resolution (Pub. L. 108-7; approved February 20, 2003), Division K, for the Research and Technology Program, Office of Policy Development and Research, has been set aside to fund grants under this program NOFA.

The maximum grant period is 15 months. The tenure will commence on the effective date of the grant agreement.

The maximum amount to be requested by and awarded to an applicant is \$55,000. HUD reserves the right to make awards for less than the maximum amount or less than the amount requested in your application.

III. Program Description; Eligible Applicants; Eligible Activities

(A) *Program Description.* The purposes of the HUD Urban Scholars Program are to:

(1) Fund research relevant to HUD priorities and issues in the United States and its possessions;

(2) Provide encouragement to new scholars to undertake research now, and throughout their careers, on topics of interest to HUD; and

(3) Make an impact on the academic context in which these scholars work so that this kind of research becomes highly valued. The research priorities for the HUD Urban Scholars Program are designed to inform federal problem-solving and policy-making relating to HUD's Strategic Goals.

(B) *HUD's Strategic Goals.* HUD's Strategic Goals are to:

(1) Increase Homeownership Opportunities. This strategic goal seeks to increase homeownership opportunities, particularly for minorities; make the home buying process easier and less expensive; fight practices that permit predatory lending; help HUD-assisted renters become homeowners; and keep existing homeowners from losing their homes.

(2) Promote Decent Affordable Housing. This strategic goal seeks to expand access to decent affordable rental housing; improve the physical quality and management accountability of public and assisted housing; increase housing opportunities for the elderly and persons with disabilities; and help HUD-assisted renters achieve progress toward self-sufficiency.

(3) Strengthen Communities. This strategic goal seeks to improve economic conditions in distressed communities; make communities more livable; end chronic homelessness; and mitigate housing conditions that threaten health.

(4) Ensure Equal Opportunity in Housing. HUD's Equal Opportunity in Housing strategic goal seeks to resolve discrimination complaints on a timely basis; promote public awareness of Fair Housing Laws; and improve housing accessibility for persons with disabilities.

(5) Embrace High Standards of Ethics, Management, and Accountability.

Through this strategic goal HUD is seeking to rebuild HUD's human capital and further diversify its workforce; improve HUD's management, internal controls and systems, and resolve audit issues; improve accountability, service delivery, and customer service of HUD and its partners; and ensure program compliance.

(6) Promote Participation of Grass-Roots Faith-Based and Other Community-Based Organizations. Through this strategic goal, HUD seeks to reduce regulatory barriers to participation by grass-roots faith-based and other community-based organizations; conduct outreach to inform potential partners of HUD opportunities; expand technical assistance resources deployed to grass-roots faith-based and other community-based organizations; and encourage partnerships between grass-roots faith-based and other community-based organizations and HUD's traditional grantees.

HUD, through its Secretarial Policy Priorities, also encourages applicants to undertake specific activities that will assist the Department in implementing its policy priorities and which will help the Department achieve its Strategic Goals for FY 2004, when the majority of funding recipients will be reporting programmatic results and achievements. Applicants who include research work that address these policy priorities will receive higher rating scores than applicants who do not address these policy priorities. HUD's Secretarial Policy Priorities are:

(1) Providing Increased Homeownership and Rental Opportunities for Low- and Moderate-Income Persons with Disabilities, the Elderly, Minorities, and Families with Limited English Proficiency. Too often these individuals are shut out of the housing market through no fault of their own. Many of these families are anxious to have a home of their own or better or more affordable rental housing, but are not aware of programs and assistance available.

(2) Improving Our Nation's Communities. HUD wants to improve the quality of life for those living in distressed communities by bringing capital to these areas to finance business investments to grow new businesses; maintain and expand existing businesses; create a pool of funds for new small or minority-owned businesses; improve the environmental health and safety of families living in public and privately owned housing; and make communities more livable by providing public and social services and