

toward self-sufficiency is based on its efforts to plan, organize, and direct resources in a comprehensive manner that is consistent with its established long-range goals. For a community to be self sufficient, it must have local access to, control of, and coordination of services and programs that safeguard the health, well being, and culture of the people that reside and work in the community. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d) and 803C of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b and 2991b-3*)

Social Development: Investment in human and social capital for advancing the well being members of the Native American community served. Social development is the action taken to support the health, education, culture, and employment options that expand an individual's capabilities and opportunities, and that promote social inclusion and combat social ills. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d) and 803C of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b and 2991b-3*)

19. Competitive Panel Review Process

ANA will consolidate the peer panel review process. ANA is required by statute to provide a peer panel review for each eligible application. Panel reviewers are selected nationally for their education, experience, and working knowledge in ANA program areas. In FY 2003, ANA began the process of expanding and rotating the pool of panel reviewers. This process will ensure that applications for funding are reviewed, analyzed, and scored by qualified professionals in the respective program area. This organizational efficiency will ensure that each application receives appropriate consideration and the panel review teams have the appropriate and necessary credentials to analyze, evaluate, and score applications. For example, readers with education and work experience in Environmental Regulatory Enhancement will be selected to review environmental applications. Readers with education and work experience in Language Preservation and Maintenance will be selected to review language applications. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d) and 803C of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b and 2991b-3*)

19. (a) Initial Screening

Each application submitted under an ANA program announcement will undergo a pre-review screening to

determine if (a) the application was received by the Program Announcement closing date; (b) the application was submitted in accordance with Application Submission Requirements; (c) the applicant is eligible for funding; (d) the applicant has submitted the proper support documentation such as proof of non-profit status, resolutions, and required government forms; and (e) an authorized representative has signed the application. An application that does not meet one of the above elements will be excluded from the competitive review process. Ineligible applicants will be notified by mail within 30 business days from the closing date of this program announcement. ANA staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification. After the Commissioner has made funding decisions, unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing within 90 days. Applicants are not ranked based on general financial need. Applicants, who are initially excluded from competition because of ineligibility, may appeal the Agency's decision. Likewise, applicants may also appeal an ANA decision that an applicant's 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 and 45 CFR part 1336, subpart C). ANA has a policy of not funding duplicative projects or allowing any one community to receive a disproportionate share of the funds available for award. When making decisions on awards of grants the Agency will consider whether the project is essentially identical or similar, in whole or significant part, to projects in the same community previously funded or being funded under the same competition. The Agency will also consider whether the grantee is already receiving funding for a SEDS project or for another project from ANA. The Agency will also take into account in making funding decisions whether a proposed project would require funding on indefinite or recurring basis. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d) and 803C of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b and 2991b-3*)

19. (b) Automation of the Panel Review Process

In FY 2004, ANA will automate its application receipt and panel review process to comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and to support the ACF Electronic Grant Application Submission Initiative. The automation

of document management will provide program operation efficiency. For example, when an application is submitted to ANA it is logged into an automated system and given an identification number. After the Program Announcement closing date ANA randomly assigns each application to a peer review panel for evaluation and scoring. During the review process, panel reviewer comments are downloaded into data files. These comments are then matched and stored with the application data file. This process consolidates all applications and review information, protects the confidentiality of the panel reviewers, and allows applicants to obtain comments in a timely manner. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d), 803C and 806 of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b, 2991b-3 and 2991d-1*)

19. (c) Panel Reviews and Funding Decisions

ANA values the knowledge and expertise of individual reviewers. Applications for funding are randomly assigned to panel review teams. Each panel reviewer is responsible for reading the program announcement **Federal Register** and scoring each application in accordance with the published review criteria. Each application is reviewed and scored independently by a panel reviewer. After the panel review process, ANA conducts due diligence on each application in the funding range. The ANA Commissioner determines the final action on each grant application received under ANA program announcements. The Commissioner's funding decision is based on an analysis of the application by each peer review panel, the review and recommendations of ANA staff, Panel Review scores, comments of 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 Native American Programs Act (NAPA), all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, this program announcement, and the availability of appropriated funds. (*Legal authority: Sections 803(a) and (d), 803C and 806 of the Native Americans Programs Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2991b, 2991b-3 and 2991d-1*)

19. (d) Award Notification Information

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