



Preparing the Narrative

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What is a Narrative?

- The Narrative is a detailed description of the Activity/Project/Service to be performed to show HCD that the applicant has a clear understanding and plan of what is going to be done and why.
- The Narrative should answer the following questions:
 - Who?
 - What?
 - When?
 - Where?
 - Why?
 - How?



Purpose & Importance of the Narrative

Doing the narrative will help HCD staff determine if the application is for an **eligible applicant** with an **eligible activity**.

- **Per the 2023 NOFA:**

- **Eligible Applicant:** Non-Entitlement UGLGs that had a waitlisted OTC application under the 2019-2020 NOFA.
- **Eligible Activity:** Activity must meet the criteria for the selected Matrix Code and National Objective.
 - List of activities can be found on 42 U.S.C. §5305 and/ or Chapter 2 of the CDBG Grants Management Manual (CDBG website)
- The Applications can only be submitted for previously applied for Projects that have not yet been funded.



Purpose & Importance of the Narrative

(continued)

- By ensuring that your narrative is as detailed as possible at the time of application, the applicant can prevent delays in standard agreement packaging, as well as future scope of work revisions or amendments once the contract has been executed.
- The more information the applicant can provide in the narrative, the better off they will be when HCD staff is reviewing the application.



Narrative Requirements

- Starting with the Why and What; state the problem and then the proposed solution to that problem.
 - Example: County Water Well Project
 - **Problem:** The County's current Water Wells, serving 5,000 people, is in desperate need of repairs on the existing wells. There are two wells needing repairs. The County has already secured funding from another funding source and due to cost overrun and inflation, the County needs \$250,000 to complete the project.
 - **Solution:** Applying with the CDBG program for gap funding to cover the difference in cost to complete the repairs on the wells.



Narrative Requirements

(continued)

- For Projects, the narrative should also be able to tell HCD staff that it is bid ready.
 - **Per the 2023 NOFA:**
 - All Projects applying for funding under this NOFA must submit the following documentation of readiness at application:
 - Independent Cost Estimate
 - Completed NEPA Environmental Review Record for the Project
 - Bid Ready Plans and Specs
 - Certification from Engineer that Plans and Specs are bid-ready
 - Certification from city that bid docs are ready



IMPORTANT

Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to give plenty of time for submitting prior to the application cutoff date and at least several hours prior to the cutoff time.

PLEASE PROOFREAD YOUR WORK PRIOR TO SUBMISSION!



Proofreading

- Proofreading is not just checking spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Good rule of thumb is also making sure that your narrative has the answers to these questions:
 - Is the need and activity clearly identified? **(What)**
 - Is there data to support that need? **(Why)**
 - Are there any partners or collaborators? If so, what are their roles?
 - Are the beneficiaries clearly defined? **(Who)**
 - Is the activity implementation clearly defined? **(How)**
 - Is the service location defined? **(Where)**
 - Is the timeline defined? **(When)**



Examples of Brainstorming Questions

Questions to ask, relating to the Activity/Project/Service:

- What is it and Why?
- When will this start and end?
- Where will this be taking place?

Questions to ask, relating to the Beneficiaries:

- Who will this benefit/help?
- How are we going to find those that need help? (Marketing)
- What is the current number of people being assisted? Describe those being helped.
- If this is a new program, describe those people who are in need of assistance. How did you find out about the people needing assistance?



Examples of Brainstorming Questions

(continued)

Questions to ask, relating to the Funding:

- How can this be solved with CDBG funding?
- What can be done with CDBG funding?
- What is the cost of the project? If gap funding, how much is still needed? Give details.
- What is the CDBG money going to be spent on?
- Who can help us, outside of CDBG?
- If this project is not funded, what will happen?

Questions to ask, relating to the Solution:

- What is the solution to the problem?
- How can CDBG funding be used to carry out the solution to the problem?
- How will you implement the solution?
- If everything goes as planned, what will the outcome be?



RESOURCES

- **2023 NOFA: Website & eCivis solicitation**
- **HCD's CDBG Website: www.hcd.ca.gov**
 - **Select the drop down "Grants & Funding"**
 - **Select "Programs: Active"**
 - **Click on "CDBG" (3rd line down)**



THANK YOU
FOR WATCHING

