



**FY 2016 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program: Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization
Application Services
Funding Opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-002
Questions and Answers**

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About the Grant Program

Q1. What is different about this year's [grant program](#)?

A1. There are a few important changes to this year's grant program:

- This year we are offering two funding opportunities;
 - The first grant program – FY 2016 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, Citizenship Instruction (Funding Opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-001) – will strengthen organizations offering citizenship instruction with grants of up to \$100,000. The performance period for these grants is two years, beginning Oct. 1, 2016. Approximately 10 awards are expected.
 - The second grant program – FY 2016 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services (Funding Opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-002) – will strengthen organizations offering both citizenship instruction and naturalization application services, with grants of up to \$250,000. The performance period for these grants is two years, beginning Oct. 1, 2016. Approximately 36 awards are expected.
- For both programs, award recipients will be required to post test at least 80% of enrolled students. Of those students, 80% must demonstrate measurable educational gains. All citizenship classes must have managed enrollment – open enrollment will no longer be permitted under the program.
- Services may also include subsequent preparation and filing of Form N-600 for a naturalization client's minor children.
- These Questions and Answers address questions on the grant *FY 2016 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services (Funding Opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-002)*.

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Q2. Where can I send questions?

A2. You may send questions about the [grant program](#) to citizenshipgrantprogram@uscis.dhs.gov. For questions about [Grants.gov](#), you may email support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Q3. Is there a list of current USCIS grant recipients available?

A3. Yes. You can find a list of current and previous grant recipients on the [Citizenship Resource Center](#) Web page.

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Eligibility

General Eligibility

Q1. Does my organization need to demonstrate 501(c)(3) status or is it acceptable to simply be a nonprofit organization?

A1. You do not need to have 501(c)(3) status. However, to be eligible, you must provide proof of public or nonprofit status as discussed on page 25 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

Q2. My organization has a pending application for 501(c)(3) status. May I apply for this funding opportunity?

A2. Yes. However, you must have proof of public or nonprofit status before final award in September 2016.

Q3. My organization is an awardee or sub-awardee under the FY 2014 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program. May I apply for this funding opportunity?

A3. Yes.

Q4. My organization is an awardee or sub-awardee under the FY 2015 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program. May I apply for this funding opportunity?

A4. No.

Q5. May a state agency apply as the primary applicant?

A5. Yes. However, the state agency must provide direct citizenship instruction or naturalization application services under the initial notice of funding. Under the junior notice of funding, the organization need only provide citizenship instruction.

Q6. I am an individual providing citizenship services to immigrants. May I apply for this funding opportunity?

A6. No.

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Q7. Are for-profit entities eligible to apply?

A7. No.

Q8. My organization is a university-based law clinic. May I apply for this funding opportunity?

A8. Yes, if your organization has public or nonprofit status. You must also meet the other basic eligibility requirements.

Q9. How many naturalization cases must my organization have submitted in the past in order to qualify as having experience with naturalization application services required for the Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services grant program? May I discuss my organization's experience with other immigration services?

A9. We do not set a minimum number of naturalization cases that you must have submitted in the past in order to qualify as having experience with naturalization application services. However, you should demonstrate the capacity to submit at least 200 [Forms N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), over the two-year performance period for grant funding opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-002. You may discuss your organization's experience with other immigration services, but we will evaluate and score your application based on your organization's experience specifically with naturalization application services.

Q10. We provide citizenship instruction and have our own assessment process, but we do not yet use a nationally normed standardized test. Are we still eligible for this grant?

A10. Yes. You do not need to have past experience using a nationally normed standardized test. You must have at least one year of experience in the past three years providing direct citizenship instruction in a classroom setting that follows a curriculum. However, your program design for this grant program must indicate that you will use a nationally normed standardized test of English proficiency for student placement and assessment.

Partners and Sub-Awardees

Q11. Are partnerships allowed?

A11. Yes. We encourage partnerships, particularly when you clearly demonstrate that each partner has the necessary expertise and experience to provide the services you will offer under this grant program. Past experience shows that successful citizenship instruction often includes partnerships between organizations that specialize in adult education, including English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship instruction, and organizations that regularly provide naturalization application services within the scope of the authorized practice of immigration law.

If you propose to give a portion of your organization's grant funding to a partner organization to provide additional or complementary direct services, then your organization is the primary applicant and the partner organization is the sub-awardee. Your organization still **must** directly provide citizenship instruction or naturalization application services, or both. The sub-awardee may provide additional or complementary citizenship instruction or naturalization application services.

If you choose to work with a sub-awardee, you must:

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- Complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the sub-awardee;
- Describe your organization’s experience working with the sub-awardee organization and your plan for providing integrated services;
- Monitor the sub-awardee’s performance and ensure that the sub-awardee complies with all grant award conditions and data reporting requirements.

Sub-awardees must:

- Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number;
- Be responsible for financial reporting; and
- Submit their reports to the primary applicant for submission to DHS.

Q12. My organization has experience providing naturalization application services. If I find a partner to provide citizenship instruction, can my organization apply as the primary applicant under the FY 2016 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, Citizenship Instruction and Naturalization Application Services (Funding Opportunity DHS-16-CIS-010-002)?

A12. Yes.

Q13. If I cannot locate a partner with one year of experience in citizenship instruction so that I can apply under this funding opportunity, what are my options?

A13. Proposed activities under this funding opportunity must include both citizenship instruction and naturalization application services. Your organization and any sub-awardees providing citizenship instruction must be able to demonstrate at least one year of experience in the past three years providing citizenship instruction.

Q14. May I have a partner that is not a sub-awardee?

A14. Yes. However, if a partner receives a portion of the grant funds to provide direct services, USCIS considers the partner a “sub-awardee.”

Q15. We are an adult learning center and we want to partner with a nonprofit organization for legal services under this funding opportunity. Who should be the primary applicant?

A15. Either you or your partner may be the primary applicant.

Q16. We would like to partner with multiple school districts to reach different areas. Is there a limit on how many organizations we can partner with?

A16. No. There is no limit on the number of sub-awardees that you may have. You should ensure that all organizations meet the eligibility requirements, and you must submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the terms of the partnership (see a detailed discussion of MOUs in the [notice of funding opportunity](#)).

Q17. We do not have experience with formal citizenship instruction or naturalization application services, but our partner has both. Do we still qualify as a primary applicant?

A17. The primary applicant must have experience providing citizenship instruction, naturalization application services, or both to qualify for this program.

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Q18. Can we partner with a pro bono attorney?

A18. No. The organization proposing to provide naturalization application services must employ an attorney or BIA-accredited representative. You may use pro bono or volunteer attorneys to supplement services, but the pro bono attorney cannot be a partner or sub-awardee.

Q19. Can we partner with private attorneys?

A19. No. Applicants and sub-awardees must be organizations with nonprofit or public status. For-profit law firms and attorneys in private practice are not eligible to receive grant funding.

Organizations with Multiple Offices

Q20. My organization is the local affiliate of a national organization. Does my organization have to be locally incorporated in order to apply?

A20. No. Your organization and any proposed sub-awardees must have public or nonprofit status but you do not need to be locally incorporated.

Q21. Can a national organization with multiple local affiliates apply as the primary applicant? If so, would the organization be allowed to provide direct services to more than one state through local affiliates?

A21. The primary applicant and any proposed sub-awardees must provide direct services in their respective geographic areas. Affiliate offices of a national organization may apply as partners on one application, but one of the affiliates must be the primary applicant.

Q22. Our organization has multiple offices in different states. Can we submit one application, or should each location submit its own application?

A22. Affiliate offices of a national organization may apply as partners on one application, but one of the affiliates must be the primary applicant. Alternatively, the affiliate offices may submit separate applications as long as there is no overlap in funding for the same staff members.

Q23. We are a college with multiple locations, and we have the same federal ID number. Will you accept more than one application from us using the same federal ID number?

A23. If an organization has multiple affiliates or locations, more than one affiliate office may apply as long as there is no overlap in funding for the same staff members.

BIA Accreditation and Recognition

Q24. Is my organization (and any sub-awardees) required to be recognized or accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)? If so, how do I prove that my organization meets this requirement?

A24. At the time of application, your organization and any sub-awardees that propose to provide naturalization application services must either: (1) Be recognized by the BIA and have at least one BIA-accredited representative employee with experience providing clients with naturalization representation; or (2) Have at least one attorney employee with experience providing clients with naturalization representation.

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You are not required to provide proof of BIA recognition or accreditation in order to apply because the list of recognized and accredited organizations is publicly available on the [U.S. Department of Justice's website](#). USCIS may ask for additional documentation before making an award.

- Q25. Our organization just received BIA recognition in January, but we have had an off-site attorney working with us in the past. Are we still eligible?**
- A25.** If your organization is recognized by the BIA and you have a BIA-accredited representative at the time you apply, you are eligible. You must show that your experience providing naturalization application services was within the authorized practice of immigration law (using an attorney or BIA accredited representative).
- Q26. Can we use pro bono attorneys until our staff member obtains BIA accreditation?**
- A26.** No. You must employ an attorney or BIA-accredited representative at the time you apply.
- Q27. Does the attorney have to be a full-time staff attorney? We have an attorney who comes in once a week.**
- A27.** No. The attorney must be an employee of the applicant or sub-awardee but does not need to work full-time. However, you must establish that the attorney is able to provide sufficient oversight of the program. The attorney must also sign [Form N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), as the preparer and sign [Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative](#), for each Form N-400 filed under this grant.
- Q28. The attorneys who provide services for our program are volunteers who receive a stipend. We would use the grant to transition the volunteers to staff members. Would this make us eligible?**
- A28.** In order to be eligible for the grant, you must employ at least one attorney or a BIA-accredited representative at the time you apply. If you are awarded the grant, you may use the grant to transition other volunteer attorneys to staff members. For a definition of “employee,” see the [NOFO Glossary](#). USCIS may ask for additional evidence of the status of attorney or BIA-accredited representative employees prior to awarding the grant.
- Q29. Where can we find a list of qualified BIA recognized organizations?**
- A29.** The Department of Justice maintains a [roster of BIA-recognized organizations](#).
- Q30. We plan to apply for BIA accreditation for a staff member right now. We can submit copies of his BIA application with our grant application. Will this make us eligible?**
- A30.** The process to obtain BIA accreditation can take six months to a year to complete. You may apply for BIA accreditation for your staff now, but it is unlikely you will receive accreditation in time to be eligible for this funding opportunity. In order to be eligible, you must employ an attorney or a BIA-accredited representative at the time you apply.

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Q31. Is there a way to speed up the BIA accreditation process so we will qualify for the grant?

A31. Unfortunately, it is not possible to speed up the BIA accreditation application process. For more information, please visit the [Department of Justice's Recognition and Accreditation Program](#) website.

Q32. We have BIA recognition and accreditation, and we are a national organization with field offices. Does the BIA recognition and accreditation apply to all of our field offices?

A32. If your organization has distinct branch offices providing legal immigration services at separate locations, each branch office must be individually recognized by the BIA. You must submit separate applications for each branch. Additionally, representatives must be BIA accredited at the branch office location to work there. For more information, see the [Department of Justice's frequently asked questions about the Recognition and Accreditation Program](#).

Q33. If affiliate offices in different states submit one application, does each location need to have an attorney or BIA-accredited representative at the time of application?

A33. At the time of application, you and any sub-awardee proposing to provide naturalization application services must have either a BIA-accredited representative employee or an attorney employee with recent experience providing naturalization representation to clients.

Q34. Is partial BIA accreditation acceptable under this grant?

A34. Yes. BIA-accredited representatives may have partial accreditation to provide services under this grant program.

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Grant-Funded Activities

Q1. Are the awards a one-time opportunity, or will there be a chance for grant recipients to renew the funding?

A1. The performance period is two years. There is no option to renew funding after two years.

Q2. If affiliate offices in different states submit one application, does each location have to provide both citizenship instruction and naturalization application services?

A2. Yes. If the applicant and sub-awardee are proposing to provide services in different states, then each location must provide both citizenship instruction and naturalization application services.

Q3. The notice of funding opportunity asks how our services will differ with grant funding. Should we discuss how we plan to grow our current services, or how our current services differ from what we propose to offer with grant funding?

A3. You must discuss how the grant program will expand and improve the existing services that you offer, even if the existing services are similar to the proposed services. For example, you might hire new teachers or offer an additional class to accommodate students' schedules.

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Q4. Does the “Program Expansion” section of the [notice of funding opportunity](#) (see pages 13 and 16) apply to FY 2014 grant recipients since the FY 2016 grant would be a continuation of the program and not an expansion?

A4. All applicants, including FY 2014 grant recipients, must discuss how the grant program will expand and improve the existing services offered, even if the existing services are similar to the proposed services. For example, you might hire new teachers or offer an additional class to accommodate students’ schedules.

Citizenship Instruction

Q5. Must the primary applicant offer citizenship instruction?

A5. The primary applicant must provide citizenship instruction or naturalization application services, or both.

Q6. The [notice of funding opportunity](#) states that organizations must provide services to lawful permanent residents only (see pages 3, 13 and 16). If my organization also serves other immigrants, should my organization place lawful permanent residents in a class by themselves?

A6. Organizations must adequately demonstrate that only lawful permanent residents will receive services funded by this grant.

Q7. Can my organization provide general ESL classes or Adult Basic Education under this funding opportunity?

A7. No. This grant funds citizenship instruction to prepare lawful permanent residents for naturalization. You must demonstrate that your organization will offer citizenship instruction that will prepare lawful permanent residents for the civics (U.S. history and government) and English (reading, writing and speaking) components of the naturalization test. You may not propose to use grant funds for other types of instruction.

Q8. We currently offer ESL classes, and many of our citizenship students participate in those same classes. Our ESL classes are funded through other grants. Will that arrangement allow us to provide services to individuals who are not lawful permanent residents?

A8. You must ensure that grant-funded citizenship preparation services are provided to **only** lawful permanent residents. This requirement does not affect other programs that are funded by other sources.

Q9. There is a requirement that students must be assessed using a nationally normed standardized assessment test. What does this mean?

A9. In the context of citizenship education, this refers to specific tests used to determine a student’s English language proficiency. A list of standardized tests that the Department of Education has determined to be suitable is available in the [Federal Register](#) and on page 14 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

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Q10. Are all students and clients required to take the nationally normed standardized test regardless of their English proficiency level?

A10. All students enrolled in citizenship instruction classes under this grant program must take the standardized test unless they meet the requirements to take the naturalization test in their own language. Clients who receive naturalization application services but do not need citizenship instruction classes are not required to take the standardized test.

Q11. How should I balance USCIS' minimum instructional hour requirements with the instructional hours required by the vendors of nationally normed standardized tests?

A11. The minimum instructional hour requirements for this grant program are listed in the [notice of funding opportunity](#) (see page 3). You may offer more instructional hours than the minimum requirement. A greater number of instructional hours may correspond better with test vendor requirements. However, you still must use a nationally normed standardized test of English proficiency for the citizenship instruction program, even if you offer a class with fewer instructional hours than the test vendor recommends.

Q12. Is my organization required to use paid instructors to teach citizenship classes?

A12. No, you are not required to use paid instructors. However, USCIS has observed that a successful citizenship instruction model includes paid instructors. Therefore, USCIS prefers that applicants and sub-awardees propose to include one or more paid teachers with at least one year of experience teaching ESL or citizenship.

Using volunteers can enhance a program's service offerings, but volunteers must have adequate training and support. If you propose to use volunteers to teach citizenship instruction, you must demonstrate that the program has a comprehensive volunteer-training program and sufficient program oversight by a paid program coordinator or paid lead teacher who is qualified to manage and oversee an education program. A paid lead teacher or a paid education program coordinator must supervise the volunteers.

Q13. Are all citizenship teachers required to have one year of teaching experience?

A13. Yes. All citizenship teachers providing services under this grant program must have at least one year of experience teaching ESL or citizenship to adults (see pages 3 and 15 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)).

Q14. May I propose to use volunteers as citizenship teachers?

A14. Yes. However, all paid and unpaid teachers providing services under this grant program must have at least one year of experience teaching ESL or citizenship to adults. Also, a paid lead teacher or a paid education program coordinator must supervise volunteer teachers. If volunteers do not have requisite experience, USCIS encourages you to use these volunteers to provide tutoring or to assist teachers in the classroom.

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Q15. Is the citizenship education coordinator required to have teaching experience?

A15. No. There is no requirement regarding the experience of the citizenship education coordinator. However, USCIS has observed that successful citizenship instruction programs employ education coordinators with teaching and management experience.

Q16. Are we required to provide an equal number of hours of citizenship instruction for every week of the cycle?

A16. No. You are not required to provide an equal number of hours of citizenship instruction for every week of the class cycle. However, most successful applicants have a fixed schedule that does not vary from week to week. If you propose to provide a varying number of hours per week, please note this in the class cycle table in the project abstract, and explain the schedule in the project narrative.

Q17. Is my organization required to offer more than one level of citizenship instruction?

A17. No. However, USCIS has observed that successful citizenship instruction programs offer more than one class level to meet the different instructional needs of students. Applicants offering a multi-level class should explain how the different levels will be managed in the classroom.

Q18. May my organization offer only one level of instruction under this grant program and refer students to other providers for all other levels?

A18. Yes.

Q19. Can we count tutoring hours towards the number of instructional hours that we are required to provide for each class?

A19. No. Only classroom instructional hours can be counted towards the requirement.

Q20. Can students receiving tutoring be counted towards the enrollment goal?

A20. No. Only classroom instructional hours can be counted towards enrollment goals.

Enrollment Requirements

Q21. Can my organization provide grant-funded services to individuals with any legal immigration status?

A21. No. Individuals receiving services under this grant program must be lawful permanent residents. You must demonstrate how you will verify and document that only lawful permanent residents will receive grant-funded services.

Q22. Do individuals who received Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) qualify for services under this grant program?

A22. No. You may serve only lawful permanent residents with this grant funding.

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Q23. Can organizations limit services based on national origin, ethnicity, religion or language?

A23. No. You must serve eligible participants regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds, national origin, or the language they speak.

Q24. A lot of the individuals we serve are exempt from the English language requirement. Can we still serve them with this grant funding?

A24. Applicants may propose to serve students who are exempt from the English language requirement. However, the majority of the citizenship instruction provided through this grant should be conducted in English. Enrollments for students in classes not conducted in English will not count towards enrollment goals.

Q25. Does USCIS require applicants to screen for income eligibility?

A25. No. There are no income eligibility requirements under this funding opportunity.

Q26. Does USCIS plan to collect client names and personal data?

A26. USCIS will not collect client names in quarterly reports. However, USCIS may collect alien registration numbers for all lawful permanent residents receiving services with this grant funding. USCIS may use these numbers to track naturalization outcomes during and after the period of performance (see page 37 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)).

Q27. My organization uses an open enrollment system for classes. Is that allowed under this program?

A27. No. You must have managed enrollment under this grant program and must provide citizenship instruction over an 8-to-15 week class cycle. A class cycle is defined as a period of time with beginning and end dates during which class meetings are held on a frequent basis.

Q28. How many lawful permanent residents must my organization serve with the funds and time allotted?

A28. Over the two-year period of performance of grant announcement DHS-16-CIS-010-002, you must provide naturalization application services to at least 200 lawful permanent residents and must provide citizenship instruction to at least 200 lawful permanent residents. We expect that many clients will receive both types of services. If you propose to serve significantly more than the minimum number required, you should rely on your experience to set goals that are realistic and demonstrate a reasonable plan to achieve these goals.

Q29. There is a requirement to enroll 200 individuals in classes and submit 200 naturalization applications. Can we serve the same 200 individuals with both services?

A29. Yes. Successful applicants generally have significant overlap between the individuals who receive citizenship instruction and the individuals who receive naturalization application services. You should integrate your services so that lawful permanent residents are aware of the full range of grant-funded services and can easily access both types of services.

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- Q30. For the program goals on page 19 and 20 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#), who can we count towards the number of lawful permanent residents who pass the naturalization test (goal 6) and naturalize (goal 7)?**
- A30.** You can count all individuals receiving grant-funded services (either citizenship instruction or naturalization application services, or both) towards the goals for the number of permanent residents who pass the test and naturalize.
- Q31. We are a smaller organization and would like to apply for less than the maximum award amount. If we apply for half of the maximum award amount, are we still required to meet the outcomes of 200 student enrollments and 200 naturalization applications filed?**
- A31.** Yes. You may request less than the maximum award amount of \$250,000. However, all applicants must enroll 200 lawful permanent residents in citizenship classes and submit 200 Forms N-400, Application for Naturalization, over the two-year performance period.
- Q32. We receive funding from another government agency and we provide naturalization application services under that contract. Can we count the naturalization applications submitted under that contract towards the 200 served under the USCIS grant?**
- A32.** No. Grant recipients may not count services provided with another grant towards the goals for this grant.
- Q33. Is there a requirement that individuals served have to naturalize during the grant performance period?**
- A33.** No. There is no requirement that the students and clients served through grant announcement DHS-16-CIS-010-002 naturalize within the grant performance period.

Naturalization Application Services

- Q34. Can my organization use grant funds to pay the costs associated with BIA recognition and accreditation?**
- A34.** Yes. However, at the time of application, your organization and any sub-awardees must be BIA recognized and have a BIA-accredited representative employee or an attorney employee with recent experience providing clients with naturalization representation. You may use grant funds to pay for additional staff members to pursue BIA accreditation. If you propose a partnership and one of your partner organizations provides only citizenship instruction, that organization may use grant funds to pay the costs associated with BIA recognition and accreditation.
- Q35. If affiliate offices in different states submit one application, do we need a national staff attorney to supervise the BIA-accredited representatives?**
- A35.** No. You may use grant funding for staff salaries at the primary applicant organization or at the sub-awardee organization. Grant funding may not support staff salaries at any other offices. Each location providing naturalization application services must meet the qualifications to provide naturalization application services (see page 6 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)).

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Q36. What percentage of naturalization application assistance must be completed by the primary legal service provider as opposed to volunteers?

A36. We do not have a requirement regarding the percentage of application assistance that the primary legal service provider must complete. Organizations proposing to use pro bono or volunteer attorneys to supplement the grant program must ensure that the staff attorney or BIA- accredited representative signs Form N-400 as the preparer, files Form G-28 with each Form N-400 filed under this grant, and mails the naturalization application package to USCIS on behalf of the client. You must provide ongoing case management to all naturalization applicants under the grant.

Q37. Are attorneys and BIA-accredited representatives required to submit Form G-28 even if students file Form N-400 on their own?

A37. You do not need to submit a Form G-28 if you did not prepare and submit the Form N-400 or provide other naturalization representation to the student. Attorneys and BIA-accredited representatives must sign [Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative](#), when they prepare and submit [Form N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), on behalf of a client or when they provide other naturalization representation to a client, such as assistance with a Request for Evidence or representation at an interview. You must mail the application package to USCIS on behalf of the client.

Q38. Is an attorney or BIA-accredited representative who files Form G-28 with Form N-400 required to attend the naturalization interview with the client?

A38. While naturalization applicants have the right to be represented by an attorney or a BIA-accredited representative at the naturalization interview ([see 8 CFR 103.2\(a\)\(3\)](#)), an attorney or accredited representative who submits a [Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative](#), is not required to attend the naturalization interview. At the interview, the interviewing officer may ask the client to sign a waiver indicating his or her desire to proceed without the attorney or BIA-accredited representative. Attorneys and BIA-accredited representatives should work with their clients to determine whether their services will include representation at the interview.

Q39. Can my organization use grant funding to support group events that provide eligibility screening and help people fill out naturalization applications?

A39. You may use grant funding to support group events that help people fill out naturalization applications. Regardless of whether you provide services under the grant program in a group setting or individually, you must:

- Provide ongoing case management for naturalization applicants; and
- Ensure that an attorney or BIA-accredited representative signs Form N-400 as the preparer, files Form G-28 with each Form N-400 filed under this grant, and mails the naturalization application package to USCIS on behalf of the client.

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- Q40. Are volunteer attorneys required to file Form G-28 at group events that help people fill out naturalization applications?**
- A40.** An attorney or BIA-accredited representative must sign [Form N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), as the preparer and must submit [Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative](#), with each Form N-400 filed under this grant. Your organization must also mail the naturalization application package to USCIS on behalf of the client and provide ongoing case management to naturalization applicants. You may use volunteer attorneys to provide assistance at a group naturalization application processing event, but USCIS recommends that the grant recipient's attorney or BIA-accredited representative sign Form G-28.
- Q41. Can we direct clients to a Web-based system that helps applicants complete and submit naturalization applications on their own if the charge for using the Web-based system is no more than \$50?**
- A41.** No. Attorneys and BIA-accredited representatives must sign Form N-400 as the preparer, submit Form G-28 with each Form N-400 filed under this grant, and mail the naturalization application package to USCIS on behalf of the client.
- Q42. When proposing a goal for the number of Forms N-400 my organization will submit, should I separately list the number of cases that include [Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions](#)?**
- A42.** No. When proposing a goal, you should count only the number of [Forms N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), that you plan to submit under the grant program.

Charging Fees

- Q43. Is my organization allowed to charge a fee for services?**
- A43.** Yes, you may charge a nominal fee for services, but it cannot exceed \$50 for either type of service. If your organization proposes to charge for services under the grant program, please present a justification for these fees, including a detailed explanation of how your organization will use the fees to enhance the program.
- Q44. Does the \$50 limit on fees for services include both educational and legal services, or is it a \$50 limit for each service?**
- A44.** The \$50 limit is for each service. You may propose a nominal fee of \$50 or less for citizenship instruction and a separate fee of \$50 or less for naturalization application services. However, it has been our experience that successful programs generally charge less for citizenship instruction than for naturalization application services. Successful programs that charge a fee for citizenship instruction usually charge no more than \$25. Such fees are sometimes used to cover the cost of books and supplies. Being mindful that the grant provides up to \$250,000 to an organization to support citizenship preparation services, you should justify any proposed fees for services in the budget narrative and include a detailed explanation of how you will use the fees to enhance the program. Program income generated from these fees must go back into the grant-funded program.

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Q45. If we charge a nominal fee for services, can we use the program income generated from those fees to pay part of the USCIS application fee for some of our clients?

A45. No. Applicants may *not* use grant funds or program income generated through grant-funded services to pay for USCIS application fees.

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Application

Q1. Is there a required format for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

A1. No. There is no required format. The MOU should include the responsibilities expected of each party, performance expectations, plans for maintaining communication, and the payment or reimbursement process for the sub-awardee(s). Both parties must sign and date the MOU.

Q2. Should organizations submit an MOU for individual volunteers?

A2. No. The MOU is required for any formal agreement between the applicant and another organization. MOUs are not required for individual volunteers.

Q3. What happens if my organization submits more than one application?

A3. If you submit multiple applications, we will contact you before we begin our review to confirm which application you want to include in the review process. We will not review the other applications.

Q4. May my organization be listed on more than one application, as either the primary applicant or the sub-awardee?

A4. You may apply only once as a primary applicant. If we receive multiple applications with your organization as the primary applicant, we will contact you to clarify which application to consider.

We do not prohibit you from appearing as a sub-awardee on multiple applications. However, you should note that the goal of the grant program is to expand the availability of high-quality citizenship preparation services for lawful permanent residents in communities across the nation. Before making an award, we will consider whether applicants represent a diverse geographic area. We reserve the right to contact all organizations included in the application before making an award.

Q5. Can I submit letters of support?

A5. No. You should not submit any documentation other than what is requested in the [notice of funding opportunity](#). We will not consider letters of support.

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- Q6. Should I attach a copy of citizenship education materials that my organization has developed, or should I just describe the materials?**
A6. You must include a description of the materials to be used for each class (see page 14 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)). You may also attach citizenship instruction materials developed by your organization, but this is not required. A description will suffice.
- Q7. Am I required to submit a project plan attachment as in previous years?**
A7. No. Instead of a project plan, you must submit a goal chart. See pages 19 and 20 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).
- Q8. If we submit our application early and forgot a document, will we be informed before the application deadline so we have time to fix it?**
A8. We will not review any applications before the deadline. If you forgot a document, you may submit a revised copy of your application package as long as you submit it before the deadline. After the application period is over, we will contact applicants to ensure that we review the correct application package.
- Q9. Is a letter of intent required?**
A9. No. There is no requirement that you submit a letter of intent.
- Q10. How to do I attach the project abstract to the application package?**
A10. Attach the project abstract to the “Attachments” form under the “Optional” section of the grant application package. Please note that the project abstract is required and your application will be deemed non-responsive if it is missing.

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Budget

- Q1. Am I required to submit both a budget narrative and a budget table?**
A1. Yes. For more information, see Section D page 21 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).
- Q2. My organization is the primary applicant and proposes to work with several partners who will provide additional direct services and receive a portion of the grant funds. Should I submit one combined budget narrative or separate budget narratives?**
A2. You must submit a budget narrative and table for your organization and a separate budget narrative and table for each sub-awardee. Provide the same level of detail for all budget narratives and budget tables.

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Q3. In the “Budget” section of the [notice of funding opportunity](#), USCIS asks applicants to show a balance of costs between the citizenship instruction program and naturalization application services program. What does this mean?

A3. We will evaluate budgets on the extent to which they include reasonable and realistic costs that support and reflect the activities described in the project narrative and the proposed numbers served. Budgets should demonstrate a commitment to providing both high-quality citizenship instruction and high-quality naturalization application services.

Q4. Is my organization allowed to subcontract services?

A4. Yes, but please note that your organization and any proposed sub-awardees must provide direct services and must demonstrate the ability to successfully manage and provide all aspects of the grant-funded project, including financial management.

Q5. May I list sub-awardee costs as contractual costs?

A5. No. You must present costs for the sub-awardee organization in a separate budget narrative and table. You should provide the same level of detail in the budgets for both the primary applicant and the sub-awardee.

Q6. Do volunteer hours count as an in-kind contribution?

A6. Yes.

Q7. Which budget category includes facility rental costs?

A7. You should include facility rental costs under “Other Direct Costs” (see page 25 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)). Facility rental costs should not be more than 20 percent of the total approved budget.

Q8. How do I demonstrate my organization’s approved fringe benefit rate?

A8. If a cognizant federal agency has negotiated or approved your fringe benefit rate, provide a copy of the agreement. If no rate agreement exists, provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, and taxes. Identify the base for allocating these fringe benefit expenses. See page 22 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

Q9. Can I apply for less than the maximum award amount?

A9. Yes.

Q10. May I include costs for interpreters and translators? If so, what budget category would those fall under?

A10. Yes. You may include costs for interpreters and translators under the “Contractual” budget category. However, these costs should be reasonable and justified in the project narrative. When possible, your organization should employ staff with knowledge of the language used by the majority of the lawful permanent residents served in the community.

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Q11. What portion of the grant funds should go to the sub-awardee?

A11. You should ensure that proposed costs reflect the activities described in the project narrative, and that the budget reasonably balances the costs between the citizenship instruction program and the naturalization application services program.

Q12. Can we include costs for mileage for staff?

A12. Transportation costs for employees and volunteers are allowed under this grant. See page 26 and 27 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#) for more information.

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Evaluation

Q1. Will USCIS favor organizations with limited resources over organizations with substantial resources that do not necessarily need additional funding?

A1. No. An organization's net worth is not one of the evaluation criteria for the Citizenship and Integration Grant Programs.

Q2. What point values will USCIS use to evaluate applications?

A2. You can find the evaluation criteria and corresponding point values on pages 30 - 32 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

Q3. How can I obtain feedback about my organization's application so that I am better prepared to apply in the future?

A3. After we announce the FY 2016 grant recipients, applicants who did not receive a grant may request a written summary evaluation and score breakdown by sending an email to: citizenshipgrantprogram@uscis.dhs.gov. We will send you the results within 60 days from the date we receive the written request.

Q4. If my organization received a USCIS grant in the past, do I receive preference over organizations applying for the first time?

A4. Each year, we review and rate each application individually. We may consider the past performance of previous Citizenship and Integration Grant Program award recipients when making funding recommendations.

Q5. Will the use of technology in the classroom impact how USCIS rates my application?

A5. During the technical review process, we will not assign points for the use of technology. However, before making an award, we may consider several policy priorities, including whether an application incorporates the use of technology in the citizenship instruction classroom (see page 34 of the [notice of funding opportunity](#)).

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Q6. May I request a top-scoring proposal from the FY 2015 grant program?

A6. You may submit a [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) request](#) to view a top-scoring proposal from the FY 2015 grant program. However, the grant program requirements have changed and a proposal from last year will not exactly match the requirements of the [current notice of funding opportunity](#). Keep in mind that it may take more than a month to obtain a response to a FOIA request.

Q7. The [notice of funding opportunity](#) states that USCIS may consider whether an application, when balanced with other potential awards and current grant recipients, represents a diverse geographic area (see page 34). What does this mean?

A7. When making an award, we may consider the balance of geographic areas represented by the applicants and current grant recipients. We seek to maximize the number of permanent residents across the United States who can receive services through this grant program.

Q8. When making awards, does USCIS consider the needs of the region and the existing services in that region?

A8. It is your responsibility to demonstrate and provide evidence of your community's need for citizenship preparation services. We may consider whether an application, when balanced with other potential awards and with current grant recipients, represents a diverse geographic area.

Q9. Does USCIS prefer to fund organizations in a particular region in the United States?

A9. No. You must demonstrate and provide evidence of your community's need for citizenship preparation services. We may consider whether an application, when balanced with other potential awards and with current grant recipients, represents a diverse geographic area.

Q10. Does USCIS award any points for the project abstract?

A10. We will not allot points specifically for the project abstract, but reviewers will consider sections of the project abstract (such as the class table) when scoring an application.

Q11. Can you suggest a website that can help us specifically research lawful permanent resident populations? In the past, we have lost points because we've only been able to break down data by foreign-born populations.

A11. For data on lawful permanent residents, you may check the DHS Office of Immigration Statistics. Please note that the sections on community need in this year's notice of funding opportunity ask you to discuss the lawful permanent resident population that your organization *currently serves* and that population's need for citizenship preparation services (see pages 13 and 16.)

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Grants.gov Requirements

Q1. Are partners (sub-awardees) required to register with [Grants.gov](#)?

A1. No. Only the primary applicant must register with [Grants.gov](#).

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Q2. Are partners (sub-awardees) required to have a DUNS number?

A2. Yes. If a partner will receive a portion of the grant funds, then the partner is considered a sub-awardee and must have its own DUNS number.

Q3. Is a national organization allowed to use one DUNS number to submit applications for local offices?

A3. Yes. A national organization may submit multiple applications under one DUNS number, but it must be clear on each application which location or affiliate office is applying.

Q4. How do I migrate to the System for Award Management (SAM) from the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system?

A4. To migrate from CCR to SAM, please follow the steps outlined in the [SAM Quick Guide for Migrating Roles](#). You can find more information on SAM at www.sam.gov.

Q5. We are in the process of getting a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). Will we have access in SAM while we are waiting?

A5. No. You will need your TIN to register in SAM, so you will not be able to access SAM while you are waiting.

Q6. Can we see the application before we are registered in SAM?

A6. Yes. You do not need to access SAM in order to view the funding announcement for the program. You may access the [notice of funding opportunity](#) at any time. For more information about the program, visit www.uscis.gov/grants.

Q7. How do I find out if we need to update our status in SAM?

A7. To see if your SAM registration is current, [check your status on the SAM website](#). It is important to check this immediately as it may take up to two weeks to update if your registration is not current.

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