

Frequently Asked Questions: HMIS Capacity Building Grant NOFA

From submitted HMIS AAQs, HUDNOFA@hud.gov email account, and HMIS NOFA Office Hours chat log

Please note: the questions listed are a consolidation of several specific questions asked that garnered the same answer. If you don't find an exact or similar match for your specific question from the list below, please submit a new HMIS AAQ on the HUD Exchange.

Page numbers in answers below are in reference to the NOFA that can be found [here](#).

Question	Answer
Are individual service providers eligible to apply for the HMIS NOFA?	To be eligible, applicants must be existing CoC program recipients that are UFAs, collaborative applicants, or HMIS Leads and are either: (1) Applying for funds to improve the existing HMIS; or (2) Applying on behalf of two or more CoCs with the intent to execute an HMIS Consolidation to improve the performance of the lower-performing HMIS.
Can our CoC apply if we already have an HMIS grant funded through the CoC Program?	A CoC can already have an HMIS grant and still apply for this HMIS NOFA.
What happens to the Consolidating CoC's HMIS Grant?	This needs to be determined by the CoC. The CoC's HMIS responsibilities and obligations to oversees and to pay for HMIS remain, even in a consolidation. It could be that the Consolidation resulting from the NOFA may create different opportunities and obligations for the CoC's HMIS grant, but these are decisions that must be made locally through the consolidation process.
Is there a match requirement for the HMIS NOFA?	No, this Program does not require cost sharing, matching or leveraging.
Is admin funding available in the HMIS NOFA?	Yes, we expect to allow recipients to apply for administration funds to cover eligible activities. Further instructions will be offered during Phase 2.
Is sub-granting allowed in the HMIS NOFA?	Yes, recipients may make multiple subawards to conduct the eligible activities.
Is this grant renewable annually?	No.
What is the length of the grant period?	24 months, non-renewable.
Our CoC is not listed on the Appendix of High-Need Implementations. Can we still apply for an HMIS Capacity Building Grant in any component? Will our CoC be competitive for the grant if not on the Appendix of High Need Implementations?	<p>Anyone that is an eligible applicant can apply. "To be eligible, applicants must be existing CoC program recipients that are UFAs, collaborative applicants, or HMIS Leads and are either: (1) Applying for funds to improve the existing HMIS; or (2) Applying on behalf of two or more CoCs with the intent to execute an HMIS Consolidation to improve the performance of the lower-performing HMIS." (page 8).</p> <p>The Appendix provides a list of CoCs with HMIS implementations determined to have highest needs, and likely competitive for the improvement and consolidation funds provided in this NOFA (page 2).</p>

	A CoC can apply and potentially be competitive, even if it's not on the list.
How did HUD determine High Need Implementations? Can we find out where our CoC falls in the rankings of the High Need Implementation?	CoCs on the Appendix were identified as high need based on their relative scoring in relation to all CoCs based on 2017 HDX submissions and 2018 AHAR submissions. HUD will not be sharing the individual CoC rankings nor providing any further information to CoCs regarding the ranking of the High Need Implementation Appendix.
Can our CoC apply for either component of the grant? Can our CoC apply for both components of the grant?	An applicant can apply for any number of eligible activities that address identified HMIS needs. The minimum award is \$20,000. If the application includes HMIS Consolidation, the maximum award is \$400,000. If the application does not include an HMIS Consolidation, the maximum award is \$150,000.
Will CoC award notices pending through the FY2018 CoC NOFA funding process be awarded prior to the HMIS Capacity Building NOFA deadline? Will the deadline be extended if not? Will the deadline be extended if there is a government shutdown?	HUD cannot answer questions about the FY18 CoC Competition because it is still open. HUD does not anticipate extending the deadline for any reason. In the event of a lapse in appropriations, communities may continue to submit questions through the AAQ and will still be able to submit in grants.gov on 1/31/19
Is the HMIS NOFA able to help pay for improvements to or creation of a comparable database (required for some agencies within CoCs to be compliant with various funding sources)?	While important, the HMIS NOFA is intended to improve the CoC's HMIS. There is no restriction applying for this activity, however, we strongly encourage CoCs to identify HMIS needs and address those gaps with this resource.
What does <u>consolidation</u> mean?	Creating a single HMIS from two or more HMISs. The consolidation would result in a shared governance charter instead of operating separate HMISs with separate governance charters. Changing or not changing HMIS Lead Agencies and sharing or not sharing data between CoCs are not a factor in determining if the activity is an HMIS Consolidation.
Is it still <u>consolidation</u> if the consolidating CoC HMISs are already on the same HMIS software/platform/implementation? With data sharing? Without data sharing?	No, if you are not <i>creating</i> or <i>combining into a single HMIS</i> with the HMIS NOFA funding, regardless of data sharing capabilities, you are not Consolidating HMISs.
Is it still <u>consolidation</u> if the consolidating CoC HMISs are already under the same governance charter?	It is likely that if the CoCs are already under the same governance charter they are already on the same HMIS implementation. However, if this is not the case and the CoCs are <i>combining their individual HMIS implementations into a single HMIS</i> then it would still be considered an HMIS Consolidation. Please consult the definition of an HMIS

	Consolidation to understand whether the activities you reference would be considered an HMIS Consolidation.
Is it still <u>consolidation</u> if the HMIS Lead is already the same for the consolidating CoC HMISs? Can we consolidate our HMISs and HMIS governance and not consolidate HMIS Leads?	If you are creating (or combining into) a single HMIS governed by a single, shared HMIS governance charter from two or more HMISs but each CoC in the consolidation either already has the same, single HMIS Lead OR each CoC in the consolidation will maintain their own HMIS Lead (so that the HMIS and the HMIS Governance is consolidated but not the HMIS Lead), you may still be considered a <u>consolidation</u> for HMIS NOFA purposes. However, please consult the definition of an HMIS Consolidation to understand whether the activities you reference would be considered an HMIS Consolidation.
Is creating a data warehouse considered <u>consolidation</u> ?	Creating a data warehouse that contains data from multiple HMISs is not eligible under the Consolidating HMIS component. Consolidating HMIS means to combine two or more HMIS implementations into a single HMIS.
Does the creation of a data warehouse qualify as upgrading, customizing, and automating routine tasks?	No, the creation of a data warehouse doesn't qualify as upgrading, customizing, and automating routine tasks. Upgrading, customizing, and configuring is for an existing HMIS.
Is it still <u>consolidation</u> if the consolidating CoCs already use the same software vendor?	Using the same software vendor does not indicate whether your CoCs are on the same HMIS implementation or your CoCs are on two or more separate HMIS implementations. An HMIS Consolidation would only be possible if it was two separate HMIS implementations that are consolidating into one, regardless of the software vendor in use.
We are a two- (or three- or four-, etc.) CoC consolidation, and we have already consolidated our HMIS under one governance charter. We still need automation, training, and data quality improvements. Can we apply as a consolidated CoC for funds for these efforts even though we have already technically consolidated?	No. If your CoCs have already consolidated, you could not apply for the HMIS Consolidation component. However, those activities might fit under a different component. We would encourage you to read the HMIS NOFA to understand where to apply for funding for the activities you reference.
Do our CoCs have to be contiguous in order to consolidate? Do our CoCs have to be in the same state to consolidate? Do our CoCs have to be within a certain proximity to each other to consolidate?	There is no HMIS Consolidation restriction on proximity, being contiguous or being within the same state.
Can we consolidate our CoCs' HMISs but not merge our CoCs?	Yes.
If we are not consolidating and are only applying for the a) improving HMIS functionality component, b) the data	Yes.

<p>quality improvement component and/or c) the training component, do we still have to complete Rating Factor 1?</p>	
<p>Does the highest performing CoC have to be the “surviving HMIS” in a consolidation?</p>	<p>This NOFA does not specify that the highest performing HMIS must be the "surviving" HMIS, but it is recommended. The decision is up to the applicants' discretion.</p>
<p>Can I apply on behalf of more than one CoC and subaward as appropriate?</p>	<p>Yes, an eligible applicant can submit a single application that covers multiple CoCs and make subawards to entities within those CoCs for carrying out eligible activities.</p> <p>To the extent that the CoCs that are part of a single HMIS implementation have different responses to the rating factors, the applicant should select the lowest capacity CoC to respond to Rating Factor 1 and 2.</p> <p>If submitting Factor 3, sub-factor 3, base the response on the highest performing HMIS involved in the proposed HMIS consolidation.</p>
<p>Could our expenses related to implementing that software upgrade (including retraining users and recreating state and local reports) be considered eligible activities under this NOFA?</p>	<p>Yes, expenses related to implementing software upgrades, including retraining users and recreating state and local reports, would be eligible.</p>
<p>Can funds be used to pay for attending the NHSDC, NAEH and vendor training/conference?</p>	<p>Assuming it is a HUD approved training or conference, yes.</p>
<p>If bringing an existing organization, like a shelter, into HMIS, would the process of importing their existing client data from their old custom data system into HMIS, be an eligible activity? Bringing them into HMIS is expanding our HMIS by covering more providers who are serving the clients in our CoC.</p>	<p>Improving data quality is an eligible activity, yes.</p>
<p>We are on the "high needs" list & I suspect the reason is that our SPMs are negatively impacted by large, privately funded shelters not entering exit destination for clients, or "don't know". I don't think that hiring staff to enter data would matter if the information is never asked to begin with. Do you have any suggestions for how to use these funds to tackle this?</p>	<p>If the eligible activities in this NOFA do not seem to address the needs identified, please submit a request for technical assistance or a question to the AAQ.</p>

<p>What if our existing software is not working well for Data Quality/Data Security and software reliability and we decide to implement a new HMIS software?</p>	<p>Software transition is only an eligible activity under the HMIS Consolidation category.</p>
<p>Our CoC's HMIS is operating effectively and efficiently but additional programming, through the use of a proposed coder and data scrubber, is required to make the system more efficient (i.e. electronic billing and invoicing for RRH and PSH rents, utilities, data clean up) would our application be appropriate for the HMIS NOFA?</p>	<p>The activity you describe may be eligible for "Upgrading, customizing, and configuring existing HMIS's functionality so that the HMIS meets HUD's HMIS data and performance standards and the CoC's data needs" or for "Improving HMIS data quality so that it meets HUD's HMIS data and performance standards and the CoC's data needs..." (page 16 of the HMIS NOFA). Please read this section and see if it applies to your CoC needs.</p>
<p>Does the NOFA allow for salary and benefits of a program support staff?</p>	<p>This award could be used to pay for new staffing to the extent that the applicant deems new staffing necessary to perform the eligible activities in this HMIS NOFA. Note that this is one-time funding for a maximum 24-month grant period, so the applicant should carefully consider the soundness of approach, cost effectiveness and scope of work as you weigh the activities that you believe would most improve your HMIS implementation.</p>
<p>We would need to hire programming staff to be able to be able to reconfigure our shared HMIS into a common region for data analysis and data quality. Would this be eligible for assistance under the HMIS NOFA?</p>	<p>Given the information provided this could be an eligible activity under improving functionality, but we encourage you to read the NOFA carefully.</p> <p>Remember, this award could be used to pay for new staffing to the extent that the applicant deems new staffing necessary to perform the eligible activities in this HMIS NOFA. Note that this is one-time funding for a maximum 24-month grant period, so the applicant should carefully consider the soundness of approach, cost effectiveness and scope of work as you weigh the activities that you believe would most improve your HMIS implementation.</p>
<p>We have projects that are meant to bring HMIS data outside of system and into the public eye using resources like Tableau, HMISHelp.com, and other tools. Could this be used for things like data dashboards or tools that HMIS admins could use outside of their actual HMIS implementation?</p>	<p>Given the information provided this could be an eligible activity under increasing data quality, but we encourage you to read the NOFA carefully.</p>
<p>Do we use the HIC or AHAR for bed coverage information when responding to the rating factors?</p>	<p>Please use the HIC.</p>

<p>In Rating Factor 2 in the HMIS NOFA, it mentions that maximum points will be awarded to applicants whose HMIS lead assists less than 50% of projects over the course of an average year. A few questions on this topic: Is this based on the full known HIC projects or HMIS Implemented projects? If users aren't tied to projects but organizations due to being leveraged for multiple projects, is there a recommendation on how we would want to calculate the 50% projects threshold?</p>	<p>For the <i>HMIS End User training</i> section of Rating Factor 2, the calculation should be based on HMIS Implemented projects (participating in HMIS) and should be calculated on a project-by-project basis, even if users assisted are assisted under more than one project.</p>
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