ENOUGH ACTIVATE Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions
10/07/24

Note: Clarifications in this document do not supersede the requirements in the [*Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*](#)*.*

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I. PROGRAM PURPOSE

1. What is the purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and program?

The purpose of this NOFO is to identify qualified practitioners and technical assistance providers for a program called **ENOUGH ACTIVATE: Accelerating Capacity, Tools, Infrastructure, Voice, Accountability, Training, and Engagement in ENOUGH Communities. The goal is to create a vibrant, diverse ecosystem of technical assistance support, resources, and practical expertise** that aligns with the ENOUGH Theory of Action and bolsters **community capacity** to plan and carry out activities detailed in the ENOUGH Grant Program NOFO.

Preference will be given to applicants with a history of working in Maryland communities, particularly Maryland-based applicants.

2. What types of activities can the ENOUGH ACTIVATE funds be used for?

ENOUGH ACTIVATE providers will deliver capacity building services at multiple levels of scale, frequency, and intensity to meet communities where they are and ensure that technical assistance support is coordinated, feasible, and effective. Examples of allowable capacity-building services, modalities, and deliverables include, among others:

- 1:1 organization support
- Small group coaching
- Broadcast trainings for a larger audience of end users (multiple communities/organizations)
- Formal learning cohorts or Communities of Practice (CoP)

- Community engagement, organizing, and outreach strategies
- Hands-on facilitation and meeting support
- Templates, toolkits, checklists, and sample processes
- Systems analyses, design, and support
- Best practices research and guidance

Through **two rounds of funding**, the Governor's Office for Children (GOC) will invest in a range of expertise, competencies, and offerings to come alongside community-led planning and assessment, partnership development, and implementation of ENOUGH activities in FY2025.

Funds may not be used to deliver direct community-based services to individuals or to duplicate existing technical assistance and capacity building services funded by the Governor's Office for Children (GOC).

3. Which communities and organizations will receive services delivered by ENOUGH ACTIVATE awardees?

Services funded by this NOFO will be delivered to recipients **identified by the GOC**, including: (1) ENOUGH Grant Program Community Quarterback (lead applicant) grantees, (2) organizations engaged in cross-sector ENOUGH partnerships, (3) stakeholder groups or key constituencies identified by a local Community Quarterback or ENOUGH partnership, and (4) other anchor institutions or partnerships in eligible high-poverty communities.

4. Is this a grant program?

Yes, this is a grant program. However, scope elements and budgets may be refined upon award, depending on the dynamic needs and priorities of the focus communities and organizations. Modifications may also be required post award upon mutual agreement.

II.   TIMELINE

5. When are applications due?

Round 1 Applications are due **October 10, 2024** with awardees notified by November 4, 2024.
Round 2 Applications are due **January 23, 2025** with awardees notified by February 28, 2025.

6. When will grant activities be implemented?

Services will be delivered between December 1, 2024 and September 28, 2025. The initial FY2025 project period will be through June 30, 2025, but a 90-day no-cost extension may be approved to allow activities to continue through September 28, 2025.

Within that window, ENOUGH ACTIVATE applicants are asked to propose a length of engagement (minimum 6 weeks to maximum of 10 months), the number/frequency of sessions and deliverables, as well as a high-level timeline or proposed sequence of the proposed activities and deliverables. Applicants may indicate a preferred project period within that window, if desired.

7. Would there be an opportunity to submit a supplemental application in Round 2 focused on areas 6-9, if our Round 1 application was awarded?

Yes. Round 1 applicants must deliver at least one competency area in Table 1, but Round 2 applicants may propose competencies in Table 1 and/or Table 2 (See NOFO pp. 7-10).

III.   PRIORITY EXPERTISE AND COMPETENCIES

8. What areas of expertise and competencies are needed?

Applicants should **have experience supporting anti-poverty and/or place-based initiatives and** demonstrate proficiency in **one or more** of the areas of expertise identified in Table 1 or Table 2 in the ENOUGH ACTIVATE NOFO. Applicants may propose to deliver services and support in multiple areas of capacity and learning outcomes and may also propose additional expertise, tools, or specialized services beyond those listed to help communities accomplish activities detailed in the ENOUGH Grant Program NOFO. The capacity building and learning outcomes listed are not exhaustive, and **it is not expected that a single provider will deliver on all learning outcomes under an identified area of expertise.**

There is no tiering, dependency, or sequential relationship across the expertise areas. The distinction of ENOUGH Result Areas as a table header was offered as context to help applicants understand the rationale for requesting these particular areas of expertise.

9. *Should we propose just one or two areas or propose to deliver content in all of our areas of expertise? What if we propose a broader subset of expertise than what is ultimately needed by focus communities?*

Please feel free to propose activities based on ALL expertise that you can provide. As the broader ecosystem of support is developed by the GOC, there may be a need for refinement or recalibration of proposed service activities to meet the needs of focus communities.

IV.   SERVICE DELIVERY METHODS AND SCALE OF ACTIVITIES

10. *What is the difference between the tables of content expertise/competencies and the list of service delivery methods?*

The NOFO Table 1 and Table 2 (pp. 7-10) detail content areas of expertise and competencies that have been identified by the GOC as critical to accomplishing outcomes aligned with the ENOUGH Theory of Action and ENOUGH Grant Program activities. Service delivery methods and allowable activities (NOFO pp. 10-11) demonstrate examples of the mechanisms by which ENOUGH ACTIVATE awardees may help increase the capacity, knowledge, skills, and infrastructure of recipient organizations.

For example, an ENOUGH ACTIVATE provider may propose to increase an organization's capacity to use and communicate local data for continuous improvement (content expertise), through 1:1 coaching (service delivery method). So, an ENOUGH ACTIVATE proposal should identify both the content expertise and the method of service delivery.

11. *Can we propose a Community of Practice that covers all areas of competency for a specific Round? Can we propose a Community of Practice in either Round?*

Yes. A Community of Practice is one possible delivery mechanism, so it may be proposed in either Round1 or Round 2. However, no single applicant is expected to cover all areas of content expertise.

12. *Does the GOC envision that the TA offered by ENOUGH ACTIVATE awardees will be evenly distributed between the three ENOUGH Tracks, or weighted toward particular stages of development?*

The GOC is in the process of assessing community needs and priorities, as well as the volume and nature of technical assistance (TA) required. Applicants to ENOUGH ACTIVATE are asked to propose a scope of work within their own individual organization's capacity and expertise. The GOC will be responsible for developing the broader ecosystem of support that includes ENOUGH ACTIVATE awardees, national partners, and state agency support.

V. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND REVIEW CRITERIA

13. What entities are eligible to apply to ENOUGH ACTIVATE?

Applications may be submitted by non-profit entities or for-profit organizations eligible to conduct business in the State of Maryland. Lead applicants may also engage subcontractors to help accomplish proposed activities. Minimum qualifications include:

- Demonstrated understanding of the systemic and structural nature of discrimination and disinvestment that have shaped ENOUGH communities and contributed to childhood poverty in these geographies, including policies and systems that continue to limit wealth building and economic mobility.

- Experience supporting place-based strategies and/or anti-poverty initiatives implemented by cross-sector coalitions or collaboratives similar to an ENOUGH Partnership Collaborative.

- Commitment to actively engage and support diverse partners and individuals in focus communities, including local government, non-profits, schools, and residents.

- Willingness to cooperate with other ENOUGH ACTIVATE providers, GOC staff, national partners, and local practitioners to create a **coordinated ecosystem** of support that centers and responds to the unique pacing, capacity, and priorities of ENOUGH communities. This may include collecting and reporting progress and/or client satisfaction data to support continuous quality improvement and impact evaluation, as well as collaboration and information-sharing across providers.

14. What is the relative weighting of the five evaluation criteria?

ENOUGH ACTIVATE proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications to accomplish proposed work.
- Quality and feasibility of proposed activities.
- Experience engaging and supporting community members and cross-sector partners.
- Cost-effectiveness and appropriateness of line-item expenses based on proposed scope.
- References and demonstrated past performance.

The GOC will build a portfolio "ecosystem" of providers through ENOUGH ACTIVATE, so weighting will depend on the volume of applications and the GOC's ability to identify unique expertise and capacity that aligns with local needs voiced by applicants, grantees and communities.

Please note that the GOC will prioritize Maryland-based practitioners, **capacity building organizations, and technical assistance service providers that are led/influenced by individuals with pertinent lived experience.** See NOFO p.13 for additional details regarding prioritization of applications.

15. How does the GOC define "cost-effectiveness" in relation to expenses for proposed scopes of work?

"Cost-effectiveness" is a measure of impact per dollar spent on an intervention, for a particular population; in other words, how much a key development outcome changes for a particular population as a result of an intervention (measured as the change in the outcome compared to how it would have changed without that intervention), per dollar cost of the intervention. There is no single threshold for an intervention to be considered "cost-effective": judging cost-effectiveness requires a comparison among alternative interventions, to identify the one that tends to have the greatest possible impact-per-dollar on a specific outcome for a specific population.

As stewards of public funds, the GOC aims to fund cost-effective programming and infrastructure that yields the highest potential impact. This is only one factor that the GOC considers, in addition to the other evaluation criteria listed in the NOFO.

VI.   INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

16. We have applied for ENOUGH Grant Program funding as a lead applicant or partner or we expect to receive funds through the Local Management Board (LMB) Capacity Building Grant. Can we also apply for ENOUGH ACTIVATE funds?

ENOUGH ACTIVATE is looking to identify providers who will <u>deliver</u> assistance to ENOUGH communities throughout the state (once awarded), not for those looking to <u>receive</u> assistance. Generally speaking, it would not be logistically efficient or feasible for an applicant to both deliver technical assistance (TA) services and be a potential recipient of TA services during the same funding cycle.

ENOUGH Partnership Collaboratives may access technical assistance and capacity building support through the Governor's Office for Children ENOUGH Grant Program, if awarded, and through services delivered via the LMB ENOUGH Capacity Building Grant.

17. Can <u>employees</u> of the State of Maryland, a public school, Local Educational Agency (LEA), or community-based organization involved in an ENOUGH Partnership Collective perform services through an ENOUGH ACTIVATE grant award if they are doing so as independent contractors or consultants?

Employees of organizations actively involved in an ENOUGH Partnership Collaborative or a partnership planning to apply in future grant cycles could have a potential or perceived conflict of interest and may be dissuaded from applying for ENOUGH ACTIVATE, depending on their proximity to grant-funded activities. If you have concerns about a potential or perceived conflict of interest, please contact the GOC staff listed in the NOFO to evaluate whether your situation presents a conflict that would prevent the GOC from making a grant award.

18. ***Can we propose to deliver services through the ENOUGH ACTIVATE that are also proposed as part of an ENOUGH Grant Program or other GOC-funded service contract or funding mechanism?***

Applicants may not be awarded state funds to provide very similar, overlapping, or duplicative services that are being funded through other state funds. The GOC will closely monitor the holistic ecosystem of ENOUGH Act funded activities. Multiple requests are allowed, any proposals that appear duplicative may need to be revised as part of the award process, and in some cases, may not be considered for funding.

19. ***Can you confirm if there are any copyright or publication restrictions that we should be aware of?***

The State of Maryland and the GOC will have a royalty-free license to use and distribute materials that awardees develop with state funds, but awardees will retain appropriate intellectual property rights for materials they create or contribute to under an ENOUGH ACTIVATE award. See sample contract language from the Maryland Department of Aging [here](#).

GOC will evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the ENOUGH ACTIVATE program as an innovative public/private partnership of community support and a critical component of the ENOUGH Initiative to end child poverty in Maryland. ENOUGH ACTIVATE awardees may be asked to report on key progress benchmarks and satisfaction data to advise the GOC's program evaluation efforts, but ENOUGH ACTIVATE service providers are not expected to conduct standalone local evaluations through this NOFO.

VII.   BUDGET GUIDANCE

20. ***Are there any caps or limits on fees, salaries, or indirect costs?***

The focus of this funding opportunity is delivery of technical assistance and capacity building services, so we anticipate indirect costs to be minimal. Nonprofit applicants may request indirect cost recovery at a rate of 10% of modified total direct costs, but any allocable costs should be identified as direct expenses. There are no explicit caps on fees or salaries, but please keep in mind that one factor of evaluation is the cost effectiveness of the proposal.

21. ***Does your organization have any preset definition of certain costs (e.g. what Other Direct Costs can/cannot include)?***

Please see the Budget Template and NOFO Budget Guidance for examples of line items for each cost category and a list of unallowable costs.

VIII. STAFF CONTACTS AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

22. Who should we contact if we have questions about this opportunity?

For programmatic questions, please contact **Cara Pugh**, **GOC Advisor for Public-Private Partnerships** at cara.pugh@maryland.gov.

For budget questions, please contact **Christina Drushel Williams, GOC Director of Community Initiatives** at christina.drushel@maryland.gov.

23. Will there be an applicant webinar or GOC office hours to field questions from potential applicants?

The GOC will hold office hours focused on ENOUGH ACTIVATE on October 7th from 4pm to 5pm ET. Please register here:
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIkdeirpjsrEtKboRHRi_AzgcV91Ww89qcT