



Texas State of Office of Rural Health

2020 Texas Rural Hospital Quality
Improvement Training Program

Application Guide

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATION

The application procedures for the 2020 Texas Rural Hospital Quality Improvement Training Program, funded through the State Office of Rural Health (SORH) at the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), are included in this Application Guide. The online application is available at:

<https://form.jotform.com/200434458515048>

The deadline for all 2020 applications is 5:00 pm CT on **May 7, 2020**. Applications **will not** be accepted after 5:00 pm on the final day of submission. All applications are to be submitted via the online application available through the link above and on TDA's website. Mailed, faxed, hand-delivered, and emailed applications will **not** be accepted. Applicants will not be allowed to supplement the application after the application deadline. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the timely submission of all required materials, including the proposal narrative and signed application.

Ensure the application is complete and signed. Only one application per applicant is allowed.

One (1) signed and completed application is required to be submitted via the online application.

For questions regarding submission of the application and/or TDA requirements, please contact the SORH at (512) 463-6121 or by email at Trenton.Engledow@TexasAgriculture.Gov.

PROGRAM RULES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

This application guide contains the requirements that all applicants are required to meet to be eligible for funding. Failure to conform to these requirements may result in the disqualification of the application. Each applicant is solely responsible for the preparation and submission of an application in accordance with the instructions in this application guide.

Statement of Purpose

The goal of the Texas Rural Hospital Quality Improvement Training Program is to provide grant funding to an experienced, qualified organization to provide in-depth education and educational resources on quality improvement to rural hospitals in Texas.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for the 2020 Texas Rural Hospital Quality Improvement Education Program are non-profit organizations that have been determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to be exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Organizations must have at least 5 years of experience developing and providing education and educational resources to rural hospitals on quality improvement.

Award Amount

Award amount shall not exceed **\$36,500**.

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds

Allowable expenses include activities (and associated costs to implement the activities) that provide education or educational resources on quality improvement to rural Texas hospitals. To include:

- Workshops
- Webinars
- Trainings
- Education Sessions

Ideally, the educational resources will solely focus on providing in-depth education on quality improvement to a limited number of **quality leaders** of rural Texas hospitals over the course of one year. This could be structured as a training course, workshops, education sessions, etc.

NOTE:

- Applicants should only request funding for costs associated with developing and providing the proposed educational activities. Any event space that is required to implement any proposed activity will be provided by the Texas State Office of Rural Health (SORH). Grantees will be required to collaborate with the SORH in identifying suitable locations and scheduling any implemented activity.

- Grant funds are to be utilized specifically as proposed by an applicant within their application, if awarded, and **shall not** be utilized to reimburse an applicant for operating expenses or debt retirement.

Responsibilities and Accountability of a Grantee

Grantees must comply with all guidelines and requirements of this program, including compliance with all reporting requirements. Grantees are responsible for the administrative/financial control and management of the grant award. Grantees must ensure they have an adequate accounting system in place and acceptable internal controls to ensure expenditures and reimbursements are reported and maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the conclusion of the project.

Grantees have full responsibility for the conduct of the project and for the results achieved. Each grantee shall monitor the day-to-day performance of the grant project to assure adherence to statutes, regulations, and grant terms and conditions. Grantees shall carry out the activities described in their scope of work to achieve project goals, objectives, and desired outcomes. Grantees will be accountable for all grant funds and must ensure all funds are used solely for authorized and eligible purposes. Each grantee must ensure:

- Funds are used only for activities covered by the approved project.
- Funds are not used in violation of the restrictions and prohibitions of applicable statutes.
- If applicable, budget and performance reports are completed in a timely manner.

Reporting Requirement

Project Completion Report (PCR)

Grantees are required to submit a Project Completion Report (PCR) at the end of the project reflecting the status of the project and all activities that were implemented. A final invoice related to the project must be submitted along with the PCR before final grant funds (10% of total grant award) will be released.

SORH staff reserves the right to request any and all documentation necessary to ensure compliance with program rules and regulations.

Reimbursement Procedures

Grantees shall receive funding on a cost-reimbursement basis for project costs incurred during the grant period of June 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021. Invoices for incurred costs made outside the project period will not be reimbursed, unless prior approval is issued by the State Office of Rural Health. Once submitted, the PCR shall be reviewed and final grant funds will be disbursed.

SORH staff reserves the right to request any and all documentation necessary to ensure compliance with program rules and regulations.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION

Application Review

Applications received will be reviewed by SORH for completeness. An application may be disqualified for the following reasons which include, but are not limited to:

- Late or Incomplete Application
- Applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria

Complete applications will be reviewed by SORH. The applications will be scored and ranked utilizing the scoring criteria.

Application Selection and Execution of Contract

TDA shall determine the final funding amount and terms of an award. TDA/SORH reserves the right to fund projects fully or partially and to negotiate individual elements included within an application. Contingent upon available funds, the selected applicant (Grantee) may be requested to submit a revised project budget and project narrative. Selected applicants will receive an official Grant Agreement from TDA. The Grant Agreement is not legally binding until it is fully executed.

False Information on Applications

If an applicant provides false information in an application that has the effect of increasing the applicant's competitive advantage, staff shall make a recommendation for action to the Director of the SORH.

Actions that the Director may make include, but are not limited to:

1. Disqualification of the application.
2. Even if an award has been made, the applicant may be liable for funds expended if adjustment to the scores would have resulted in a change in rankings for the purposes of funding.
3. Holding the applicant ineligible to apply for SORH funding for a period of (2) program years.

An applicant may request reconsideration of a decision of the SORH Director by filing a written request for reconsideration with the Administrator of the Division of Trade and Business Development. The written request should include the factual and legal basis supporting the request for reconsideration, along with supporting documentation. The Administrator shall make a written determination on applicant's request for reconsideration within sixty (60) days of TDA's receipt of the request for reconsideration.

Scoring Criteria

All eligible applications received by the published deadline will be scored and ranked utilizing the following scoring criteria.

1. Summary of Applicant Experience
 - a. The summary contains a strong overview of the experience of the applicant in providing education and educational resources to rural hospitals and demonstrate at least five years of related experience. 5 pts.
 - b. The summary contains an adequate overview and adequate amount of related experience. 3 pts.
 - c. The summary contains a weak overview and adequate amount of related experience. 1 pt.
 - d. The summary did not contain an overview and/or did not demonstrate an adequate amount of experience. 0 pt.
2. Project Summary
 - a. The summary contains the type, purpose, activities, beneficiaries and estimated total project cost. 5 pts.
 - b. The summary contains most of the required information, but did not provide all. 3 pts.
 - c. The summary contains some of the required information, but did not provide all. 1 pt.
 - d. The applicant did not provide a project summary. 0 pts.
3. Project Problem/Need Description
 - a. The applicant convincingly describes an immediate problem/need and why funding is needed. 5 pts.
 - b. The applicant addresses a problem/need and why funding is needed. 3 pts.
 - c. The applicant does not clearly address or describe a problem/need and why funding is needed. 1 pt.
 - d. The applicant did not address a problem/need and why funding is needed. 0 pts.
4. Project Description
 - a. The applicant provides a detailed description of the solution, activities, project implementation plan, and general description of expenditures/costs. 5 pts.
 - b. The applicant provides a solution, activities, project implementation plan, and general description of expenditures/costs. 3 pts.
 - c. The applicant does not clearly explain or describe a solution, activities, implementation plan, or a general description of expenditures/costs. 1 pts.
 - d. The applicant did not address the solution, activities, implementation plan, and/or a general description of expenditures/costs. 0 pts.
5. Project Budget Summary, Budget Narrative & Justification
 - a. The budget is reasonable, detailed, and provides all necessary costs and justifications. 5 pts.
 - b. The budget is reasonable and provides some details on necessary costs and justifications. 3 pts.
 - c. The budget is questionable with limited details. 1 pts.
 - d. The budget is not provided or has no supporting details. 0 pts.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Right to Amend or Terminate Program

TDA reserves the right to alter, amend, or clarify any provisions, terms, or conditions of this program or any grant awarded as a result thereof, or to terminate this program at any time prior to the execution of an agreement, if TDA deems any such action to be in the best interest of TDA and of the State of Texas. The decision of TDA will be administratively final in this regard.

Proprietary Information/Public Information

The applicant is responsible for clearly designating any portion of the application that contains proprietary or trade secret information and must state the reason(s) the information is designated as such. Merely making a blanket claim the entire application is protected from disclosure because it contains proprietary or trade secret information is not acceptable and shall make the entire application subject to release under the Texas Public Information Act. In the event a public information request for the application is received, TDA shall process such request in accordance with Section 552.305 of the Texas Government Code. Applicants are advised to consult with their legal counsel regarding disclosure issues and to take appropriate precautions to safeguard trade secrets or any other proprietary information.

All applications submitted under this program are subject to release as public information, unless the application or specific parts of any such application can be shown to be exempt from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, Chapter 552 of the Government Code.

Conflict of Interest

The applicant is required to disclose any existing or potential conflicts of interest relative to this grant program. Failure to disclose any such relationship may result in the applicant's disqualification or termination of agreement.

General Compliance Information

1. Grantees must comply with TDA's reporting requirements and financial procedures outlined in the grant agreement. Any delegation by the Grantee to a subcontractor regarding any duties and responsibilities imposed by the grant award must be approved in advance by TDA and shall not relieve the Grantee of its responsibilities to TDA for their performance.
2. All grant awards are subject to the availability of funds appropriated and authorized by the Texas Legislature.
3. Grantees must remain in full compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Non-compliance may result in termination of the grant or ineligibility for reimbursement of expenses.
4. Grantees must keep separate records and a bookkeeping account (with a complete record of all expenditures) for a project. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the completion of the project, or as otherwise agreed upon with TDA. If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action

is initiated prior to the expiration of the three-year retention period, then all records and accounts must be retained until their destruction is authorized by TDA. TDA and the Texas State Auditor's Office (SAO), or any successor agency, reserve the right to examine all books, documents, records, and accounts relating to the project, including all electronic records, at any time throughout the duration of the agreement until all litigation, claims, negotiations, audits or other action pertaining to a grant is resolved, or until the expiration of the three-year retention period, whichever is longer. TDA and the SAO, or any successor agency, shall have access to: all electronic data or records pertaining to the grant project; the physical location where records are stored; and all locations related to project activities.

5. If the Grantee has a financial audit performed during the time the Grantee is receiving funds from TDA, upon request, TDA shall have access to information about the audit, including the audit transmittal letter, management letter, any schedules, and the final report or result of such audit.
6. Grantees must comply with Texas Government Code, Chapter 783, Uniform Grant and Contract Management, and the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS).