



Partner Grant Applications: Q&A

This resource has been prepared by the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development (BED) to provide answers to questions posed about the 2022 Guaranteed Income Pilot Partner Grant Application opportunities. Questions have been adapted for clarity. Questions and answers have been made available to the public on the Cook County website on June 3, 2022. Additional questions may be emailed to guaranteedincome@cookcountyil.gov but answers are not guaranteed.

General Questions

Q: What is the difference between the Outreach Partner Application and the Payment Administration Partner Application?

A: The Payment Administration Partner will be responsible for setting up and administering a user-friendly guaranteed income participant application, offering direct assistance and troubleshooting during the application window, conducting lottery selection and eligibility verification, distributing and tracking monthly cash payments, and capturing metrics and required data documentation for reporting and evaluation purposes.

The Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner(s) will be responsible for conducting widespread, accessible, and culturally competent outreach about the Cook County Guaranteed Income Pilot to priority and hard-to-reach communities, as well as offering in-person application assistance. More detail can be found at <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/promise>.

Q: Are there page or character limits on the narrative response?

A: We encourage all applicants to be as clear and concise as possible. However, there are no set page or character limits.

Q: Do we upload the completed application?

A: Yes. Applicants may provide their narrative responses directly in the downloadable application Word Document or create a separate document that includes responses to all required questions. Completed applications may be submitted as Word Documents or PDFs and should be uploaded to the relevant application portal at <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/promise-guaranteed-income-pilot-payment-administration-application> or <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/promise-guaranteed-income-pilot-outreach-and-person-application-assistance-application>.



Q: Is there a budget for this project (min/max)?

A: The County anticipates awarding up to \$1,950,000 in total for the selected Payment Administration Partner and any subcontracting agencies. The County anticipates awarding up to \$200,000 in total for the selected Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner and any subcontracting agencies.

Q: Are there any low-income populations that are excluded from being able to participate?

A: Participants will be eligible to apply if they meet the following criteria:

- Aged 18 or older;
- Resident of Cook County;
- Household income at or below 250% of the federal poverty level; and
- No one in the household is currently participating in another guaranteed income pilot. This includes the City of Chicago's Resilient Communities guaranteed income pilot.

There may be impacts to participants' existing public benefits. We will provide more detailed information about these anticipated impacts as the application window approaches.

Q: Will there be a sample budget or guideline to go by when completing the budget template?

A: In the provided Budget Template, Tab B provides brief explanations of each budget category. Applicants should complete the budget template in line with what they feel is necessary to implement all proposed activities.

Q: Would it be possible to see a preview of Cook County's standard contract language? We might include sub-contractors in our responses and in order to do so we would like to be able to share with them what the contract might look like in advance, if possible.

A: For this stage in the partner application process, we would direct prospective partners to review the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) Compliance Guidelines at <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Compliance-and-Reporting-Guidance.pdf>.



Payment Administration Partner

Q: Can for-profit organizations apply? Will the county be considering Payment Administration applications from organizations that are not 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 entities?

A: Yes, for-profit organizations may apply. Please note, selected partners will enter into agreements with Cook County as subrecipients, not as contractors. For-profit organizations can apply by supplying similar application materials as their respective non-profit counterparts. If a required attachment is not applicable, you may upload documentation that notes your organization's for-profit status in its place.

For-profit partners will be subject to the same Uniform Guidance as non-profit partners, as enumerated in Title 2 CFR Section 200. Title 2 CFR Section 200.501(h) notes that while for-profit companies are not subject to single-audit requirements, the County may elect to subject for-profit subrecipients to additional compliance measures including but not limited to: pre-award audits, monitoring during the agreement, and post-award audits. Specific programmatic audit requirements are subject to additional guidance from Cook County to be communicated at a later date.

(References: [2021 Compliance Supplement Addendum \(Appendix XI\)](#) and [2 CFR section 200.501](#))

Q: What type of [participant] expenditure tracking is the County expecting to see?

A: Cook County is interested in collecting reasonable participant expenditure data, particularly as it relates to the community and small businesses spending impacts of guaranteed income. We are interested to hear from Payment Administration Partner applicants about their experience, expertise, and best practice suggestions related to participant expenditure data tracking. We anticipate solidifying this process with the selected partner agency.

Q: Are there any payment options that you want us to ensure we are considering/building in?

A: BED is prioritizing payment options that avoid fees related to direct deposit and debit cards. The Payment Administration Partner will be responsible for confirming the participants' preferred payment option, (direct deposit, debit card, e-debit card). The County is open to additional suggestions from partner applicants regarding best practice payment methods.

Q: If Cook County selects a different Payment Administration Partner than the partner already working with the City of Chicago, is the expectation that those partners will work together to [review] participant enrollment?

A: If the County selects a different payment administration partner than the City of Chicago, we expect that these partners will work together to confirm that participants



selected for the County Guaranteed Income Pilot Program are not already participating in the City's Guaranteed Income Program.

Q: When Cook County did the 2020 Cook County Resident Cash Assistance Program to 14,000 households, how many payments were distributed direct deposit vs. debit card vs. e-debit card?

A: The vast majority of 2020 payments were distributed via direct deposit. Virtual debit cards/e-debit cards were the least used payment distribution method.

Q: Are you able to share information about the distribution model you are considering for the lottery?

A: We are still working to finalize the distribution model.

Q: What are the documentation requirements the [participant] applicants must submit?

A: The County will work in tandem with the selected Payment Administration Partner to finalize participant application documentation requirements. We are interested to hear from Payment Administration applicants about their experience, expertise, and best practice suggestions related to participant application documentation requirements.

Q: Is the contractor required to store the [participant] documentation submitted?

A: Record retention requirements will apply to participant documentation. The County will work with the selected Payment Administration Partner to further define the required length of time for retaining documentation.

Q: Can the real-time dashboard required by the County be [delivered] through API's?

A: Applicants should propose the back-end dashboard method(s) that they believe will most effectively track application, selection, and payment distribution.

Q: Has the County begun securing benefits waivers? Is there any progress that can be shared, or anything that might help determine the level of effort expected for the benefits counseling role?

A: The Cook County Guaranteed Income team has been meeting with the City of Chicago Guaranteed Income team on a regular basis and has discussed benefit waivers. We anticipate securing these waivers in the upcoming months. Applicants should share their experience related to the effort required for benefits counseling.

Q: To confirm, can subcontractors be used for the benefits counseling?

A: Yes, subcontracting is allowed.



Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner(s)

Q: Is the \$200,000 amount per agency or in total?

A: At this point, \$200,000 is the total amount budgeted for all outreach and in-person application assistance activities.

Q: Do you have any plans for trying to connect agencies from across Cook County to contract and subcontract this work? Or is it up to the agency to use their existing relationships?

A: Following the Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance information session, attendees that were interested in finding partner organizations to apply with had the option to complete a short submission form noting their contact information and service area. This form was shared with all attendees. If you would like to receive a copy of this form, please email guaranteedincome@cookcountyil.gov.

If your organization serves a targeted geographic area and is not able to form a subcontracting partnership prior to submission, we still encourage you to submit your application. When reviewing applications, the County will assess whether additional organizational partnerships may best serve the outreach and in-person application assistance needs of the Guaranteed Income Pilot.

Q: Should an applicant apply with the intention of serving the entire service area, or could an organization apply for just one portion of the service area?

Q: Would our agency have to serve all 7 suburban locations, plus the City of Chicago, or would we be referring individuals from outside our specific area to agencies in the other areas?

A (both): Cook County's preference is to select one lead Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner, and that any partnering organizations apply under a single lead agency with subcontracting agencies.

If your organization serves a targeted geographic area and is not able to form a subcontracting partnership prior to submission, we still encourage you to submit your application. When reviewing applications, the County will assess whether additional organizational partnerships may best serve the outreach and in-person application assistance needs of the Guaranteed Income Pilot.

Q: Is this program complete in Fall 2022 or will it potentially extend through 2025?

A: We anticipate that the role of the Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner will run through 2022. This role is primarily focused on conducting outreach around the Cook County Promise Guaranteed Income Pilot and supporting prospective participants through application process.



Q: Will Cook County provide branded marketing materials or does the agency need to create them?

A: The County will have program branding, toolkits, and templates, but printing expenses will fall to individual agencies. These costs should be built into proposed budgets.

Q: What would the County like to see from organizations helping to coordinate this program?

A: Beyond what is stated in the overview document and selection criteria, we are interested in bringing on Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner(s) that have strong existing relationships in Cook County communities, have worked to build significant trust within the populations and communities the Guaranteed Income Pilot aims to serve – and organizations that are excited for the opportunity to be a part of this transformational initiative.

Q: What type of training, technical assistance, or support will be provided after an organization is awarded?

A: The selected Outreach and In-Person Application Assistance Partner(s) will be provided with additional information on the details of the Guaranteed Income Pilot and participant application processes. The selected Payment Administration Partner will also work closely with the County and selected outreach organizations to ensure a comprehensive understanding of all participant application interfaces, deadlines, and documentation requirements.