

FY 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Narrative Get Ready Guide

The fiscal year (FY) 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program application period will be opening soon. This handy guide will give you a kick-start in prepping your grant application, and better prepare you to thoroughly answer application questions.

Goal of the AFG Program

The primary goal of the AFG Program is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTA). The AFG Program has helped firefighters, emergency medical responders and SFTAs obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

Be prepared to thoroughly explain, document, and provide background information on the following five areas:

- Organization (and the community you serve)
- Financial Need
- Project Description/Budget Justification
- Operations and Safety/Cost Benefit
- Statement of Effect/Impact on Daily Operations

The following questions can help you formulate comprehensive answers on your application. Begin your discussion with a brief (no more than three sentences) opening statement as to what you are requesting and why. Then discuss the following:

Organization and the Community Served

- In your own words, describe your organization
- What are your special needs required to serve the community?
- Describe any special hazards in your community.
- What are the demands of your organization based on the needs of the community?



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Financial Need

- Why do you need federal assistance and is it consistent with the intent of the AFG Program?
- Describe your financial distress, including budget constraints.
- Describe attempts you have made to secure funding elsewhere and why your financial distress is out of your control.

Project Description and Budget Justification

- Clearly discuss project objectives and their relationship to budget and risk analyses.
- Explain how the proposed expenses are linked to completion of the project.
- Describe how the various activities applied for are consistent with project objectives, your mission, and local requirements
- For the most competitive application, select the need(s) that most closely align with the highest AFG Program priority(ies).

Example: Organization “X” has local needs for an additional Fire Boat (> 20 feet) for their fleet, advanced Marine Firefighter training for members, and new personal protective equipment (PPE) turnout gear to replace their entire 20-year-old inventory.

1. Fire Boats are Low (L) priority for all organizations;
2. Marine Firefighter training is a Medium (M) priority for all organizations; but,
3. Replacing unusable/unrepairable PPE turnout gear is a High (H) priority for all organizations.

Organization “X” is eligible to apply for all three activities (Fire Boat under Vehicle Acquisition, and Marine Firefighting and PPE under Operations and Safety), but among these local needs, the PPE request (which matches the High AFG Program priority) will be the *more competitive application* with the best chance of being funded.

Operations/Cost Benefit

- What is the benefit to your department if the grant is awarded?
- How will you address the operations and personal safety needs of your organization, including cost effectiveness and sharing assets?
- Include details about gaining the maximum benefits by citing required costs.
- Will the requested items lower or increase your department’s operating costs?
- Is the request consistent with your mission?

Statement of Effect

- What effect will your request, if funded, have on overall effectiveness, daily operations, and the reduction of common risks?

- How frequently will the items be used and in what capacity?
- What impact will this project have on your community and the saving of lives and property?
- What mitigation strategies are used to reduce fire risk?

Questions? Call the AFG Program Helpdesk at (866) 274-0960 or e-mail firegrants@fema.dhs.gov.