

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Program Self-Evaluation Sheet: Recruitment and Retention Activity for Interest Organizations

This Self-Evaluation Sheet is designed to help you understand the criteria that you must address in your Narrative Statement when applying under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program – Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Activity for Interest Organizations. A peer review panel will review all the criteria in the Narrative Statement to assess your organization’s financial need, the degree to which your proposal best describes your organization and community risks, the requirements you have listed that will reduce those risks, and how your application aligns with the SAFER Program priorities. The panel score is 70% of the total application score. Space for the Narrative Statement is limited to maximum number of 3,000 characters per narrative element and 4,000 characters for the Financial Need.

1. Project Description (30%)

Applicants must describe in detail the problems and issues the fire departments participating in this application are experiencing in both recruiting new volunteer firefighters and retaining current members. Applicants must describe the implementation plan, including the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. In addition, the applicant must describe the current marketing plan already in place, or the marketing plan to be put in place with or without grant funds, and how the program will be evaluated for impact on the identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. The application must clearly explain how the effectiveness of the grant program will be measured. Applicants must also describe the specific services the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide for the fire departments participating in this application and their respective communities. The applicant must also adequately describe the organization’s procurement practices and the timelines outlining the chronological steps to complete the activities requested in this application.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:



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Strongly Agree: The applicant clearly explains the recruitment and/or retention problems and issues identified by the participating fire departments. There is a clear explanation of their implementation plan as well as clear details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant clearly describes their current marketing plan or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides a clear description on how they will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program. The applicant clearly describes the specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire departments and their respective communities. Procurement practices and timelines have also been clearly described. I have a clear understanding of the project description.

Agree: The applicant adequately explains the recruitment and/or retention problems and issues identified by the participating fire departments. There is an adequate explanation of the implementation plan as well as adequate details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant adequately describes their current marketing plan or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides adequate information on how they will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program. There is an adequate description of the specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire departments and their respective communities. Procurement practices and timelines are adequately described. I understand most elements of the project description but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

Neither Agree nor Disagree: The applicant provides some explanation of the recruitment and/or retention problems and issues identified by the participating fire departments, but some details are lacking. There is some explanation of the implementation plan as well as the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant somewhat describes their current marketing plan or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides some information on how they will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program but lacks the level of detail needed. The applicant somewhat addresses the specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire departments and their respective communities. Procurement practices and timelines are somewhat described.

The project description is somewhat described but more detail on most of the elements would have been helpful.

Disagree: The applicant provides minimal detail and explanation regarding the recruitment and/or retention problems or issues identified by the participating fire departments. There is minimal explanation of the implementation plan as well as minimal details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. Minimal details are also provided on their current marketing plan or the marketing program to be put in place. There is minimal explanation regarding how the overall effectiveness of the grant program will be evaluated. There is minimal discussion of the specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire departments and their respective communities. Procurement practices and timelines are minimally described. I do not have a clear understanding of the recruitment and/or retention problems or issues the fire departments are experiencing, or how this grant would address their needs.

Strongly Disagree: The applicant provides no details or explanation of the recruitment and/or retention problems or issues identified by the participating fire departments. There is no detail on the implementation plan or the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant does not provide information on their current marketing plan or the marketing program to be put in place.

There is no indication that the project will be evaluated for its impact, and there is no discussion of the specific benefits the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide. Procurement practices and timelines are not included. I do not understand what the project proposes to accomplish.

2. Impact on Daily Operations (30%)

Applicants must describe how the participating fire departments and their current volunteer firefighters and communities are at risk without the items or activities requested in the application. The applicant must also describe how that risk will be reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant must also explain the impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters will have on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliance of the fire departments participating in this application.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

Strongly Agree: The applicant clearly explains the risk(s) to the fire departments participating in this application, including their communities and current volunteer firefighters, without the items or activities requested. The applicant clearly describes how those risks would be greatly reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides detailed information on how the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters will impact the NFPA compliance of the participating fire departments. The applicant has clearly addressed how risks will be reduced, both to current volunteer firefighters and their communities, through the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters. I have a clear understanding of the risks and how those risks will be mitigated if awarded.

Agree: The applicant provides an adequate explanation of the risk(s) to the fire departments participating in this application, including their communities and current volunteer firefighters, without the items or activities requested. The applicant provides adequate information on how those risks would be reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides adequate information on the impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the NFPA compliance of the participating fire departments. I understand the risks to the fire departments and their current volunteer firefighters and communities, but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

Neither Agree nor Disagree: The applicant provides some explanation of the risk(s) to the fire departments, including their communities and current volunteer firefighters, without the items or activities requested. The application provides some information on how those risks would be reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides some information on the impact that the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the NFPA compliance of the participating fire departments but has not included sufficient detail needed to confirm this. I believe there is some indication that recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk, both to the communities and current volunteer firefighters, but more details on most elements would have been helpful.

Disagree: The applicant provides minimal information about the risk(s) to the community and current volunteer firefighters without the items or activities requested. It is unclear how the risks would be reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides minimal information on the impact that the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the NFPA compliance of the participating fire departments. Without any additional detail, I believe there is little indication that recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk to the fire departments participating in this application and their communities.

Strongly Disagree: The applicant provides insufficient details regarding the risk(s) to the community and current volunteer firefighters without the items or activities requested, nor is there any information on the risk would be reduced. There is no information on the impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the NFPA compliance of the participating fire departments. I do not believe recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk to the fire departments participating in this application and their communities.

3. Financial Need (30%)

Applicants must provide a detailed income versus expenses breakdown of the organization's current annual budget. The applicant must include details about the organization's particular budget shortfalls and its inability to address financial needs without federal assistance. The applicant must explain what other actions the organization has taken to obtain funding elsewhere (e.g., state assistance programs, other grant programs), and how similar projects have been funded in the past. The applicant must discuss how the critical functions of the organization are uniquely affected without this funding.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

Strongly Agree: The applicant clearly identifies and articulates an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant clearly describes their particular budget shortfalls and provides clear justification regarding why federal assistance is needed. The applicant provides clear details on how critical functions of their organization are affected without federal funds. The applicant provides clear information on other actions they have taken to obtain funding from other sources and how similar projects have been funded in the past. It is clear that the financial needs described are beyond the applicant's control, and I believe their request shows a dire need for federal assistance.

Agree: The applicant adequately identifies and articulates an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant adequately describes their particular budget shortfalls and provides adequate justification on why federal assistance is needed. The applicant provides adequate details on how critical functions of their organization are affected without federal funds. The applicant explains some attempts to obtain funding from other sources and explains how similar projects have been funded in the past. I understand the applicant's current budget and believe there is a need for federal assistance, but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

Neither Agree nor Disagree: The applicant provides some information on an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant briefly explains their particular budget shortfalls but the reasons why federal assistance is needed is lacking. The applicant provides some details on how critical functions of their organization are affected without federal funds. The applicant briefly discusses their attempts to obtain funding from other sources and how similar projects have been funded in the past. I am unsure of the applicant's current budget and needs; therefore, I am unsure whether there is an urgent need for financial assistance. More detail on most elements would have been helpful.

Disagree: The applicant provides minimal detail on an income versus expenses breakdown of their budget or their particular budget shortfalls or the need for federal assistance. There is minimal information on how critical functions of their organization are affected without federal funds. There is minimal explanation on their attempts to obtain funding from other sources or how similar projects have been funded in the past. There is minimal information to understand the applicant's financial need. Therefore, I believe there is no apparent need for financial assistance.

Strongly Disagree: The applicant provides no details on their annual budget or their budget shortfalls or need for federal assistance. There is no information on how critical functions of their organization are affected. There is no explanation on their attempts to obtain funding from other sources or how similar projects have been funded in the past. There is no detail for the reviewer to understand the extent of the organization's financial situation or budget.

Therefore, I am unable to determine a financial need.

4. Cost Benefit (10%)

Applicants must describe the specific benefits (e.g., quantifying the anticipated savings and/or efficiencies) the participating fire departments and their communities will realize if awarded the items or activities requested in this application.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

Strongly Agree: The applicant provides a clear and quantifiable explanation of the specific benefits the participating fire departments and their communities expect to achieve. I believe the benefits are well explained and likely to be achieved.

Agree: The applicant provides an adequate explanation of the specific benefits the participating fire departments and their communities expect to achieve. I believe the benefits are adequately described and may be achieved, though a greater level of detail would have been helpful.

Neither Agree nor Disagree: The applicant provides some explanation of the specific benefits the participating fire departments and their communities expect to achieve. I believe the benefits have not been clearly defined and I am unsure whether the benefits will be achieved. More detail would have been helpful.

Disagree: There is minimal detail regarding the specific benefits the fire departments and their communities expect to achieve. I am unable to determine whether the stated benefits would be achieved.

Strongly Disagree: There is no detail on the benefits the fire departments and their communities expect to achieve. Because there is insufficient information, I do not understand what the project proposes to accomplish, and it is doubtful the benefits would be achieved.