**FY2025-26 Comprehensive Grant Application Frequently Asked Questions**

**(as of March 28, 2025)**

**USING COGNITO FORMS**

1. **Can I skip through pages in the application?**

A: Yes, you can use the numbered page labels at the top of each page to navigate to other pages.

1. **How do I save the form and how do I return to the form?**

A: In the bottom right on each page of the application, there is a save button. When you click save, a pop-up window will appear to notify you of the save. Cognito will also send you an email with the link to return to your application. If you need a link sent, email Kerry at kcordan@scfirststeps.org and she can have one sent.

1. **Can multiple people work in the online form at the same time?**

A: No, only one person can be working in the form at a time. You can share your link to return to the application with multiple people for them to work on it, you would just need to coordinate who is working on it and when.

1. **What do I do if the link no longer works?**

A: Email Kerry at kcordan@scfirststeps.org and she can have a new link sent to you

**GRANT APPLICATION**

1. **Do you have to collaborate with a local partnership, or can you use external community outreach?**

A: You can partner with external entities, but there needs to be true partnership with financial investment and program delivery from the external partner. We strongly encourage you to collaborate with another local partnership.

1. **Page 6 operational capacity, are those questions related to FY2025- 26 or the current year (FY2024-25)?**

A: Use the current year (FY2024-25), the application has been updated to show this clarification.

1. **Do we include all funds, i.e. for a grant that has been submitted but not awarded or a grant that is not a program grant?**

A: If the grant has not been awarded, you should not include, but all existing/awarded grants and other funding should be included.

1. **Under grants, our DPIL is 90% donations, should we include that?**

A: Yes, you should include all programs independent of funding source and the PTS associated with that funding.

1. **Can recommendations be provided of programs that are known or likely to increase scores on kindergarten readiness assessments (e.g. KRA)?**

A: First Steps programs are identified as Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed as well as whether they are High Intensity or not. Although every Evidence-Based program has its own research base, staff requirements, linkage to community services, and model fidelity, we believe that programs with higher levels of rigor as indicated by published, peer-reviewed research and/or evidence-based program resource lists (e.g. HomVEE for home visiting program models) are more likely to increase KRA scores for program participants. First Steps evidence-based programs include focus areas such as literacy, numeracy, social emotional development, gross and fine motor control, parent and child interaction, and family well-being that contribute to overall school readiness. Programs designated as High Intensity, in addition to Evidence-Based, provide more intensive interventions in comparison to “lighter touch” programs (e.g. book distribution) and are more likely to positively impact KRA scores as well.  We encourage you to do additional research into specific program models beyond these levels of distinction to determine whether programs are likely to maximize KRA score improvement for participants.

1. **For funding eligibility for LPs who are on CAP, do they have to be off CAP at the time of application submission, or at the time of funding award?**

A: You must be off CAP at the time of funding award (June 21, 2025)

1. **On the AmeriCorps page, it says “NEW.” Do LPs who already have AmeriCorps need to re-apply or only new applicants?**

A: If you are a current AmeriCorps implementer, the section for AmeriCorps will automatically show in your grant application. If you are new to AmeriCorps, check the box on the first page and that section will appear in the grant application.

1. **Does the Cognito form allow for entry of more than one program implementation plan if needed?**

A: Yes, at the end of the first program implementation form, you can check the box to complete a second form. If you need to complete 3 forms, contact your program officer.

1. **What is eligible for READY?**

A: READY funds can be used for any program in our catalog but please review the guidance on page 1 of the grant application regarding READY priorities. They should not be used for capacity building. Keep in mind this is a one-year grant.

1. **Can you define “contractor” or “using contracts” (reference to Q in Operational Capacity page)?**

A: Anything where a programmatic service is being provided and/or where grant agreements exist for services provided using funding from external (to SCFS) sources