

collaborative planning, linkage with other current studies, and secondary analysis of existing data. Priority will be given to applicants who propose cost-effective ways of utilizing existing information. For example, resource and referral data, subsidized program data, and census data might be analyzed to characterize local and statewide patterns of demand and supply in the low-income sector as well as point to possible future trends. Ongoing studies might also be expanded, linked, or otherwise utilized in the development of a comprehensive research strategy. In addition, it is often possible for teams working cooperatively to produce a more cohesive, conceptually integrated project than would otherwise be possible. For this reason, researchers are challenged to develop innovative research partnerships which leverage existing knowledge and resources. Priority will also be given to applicants who are able to obtain significant additional funding or in-kind contributions from their partners.

A third goal is to increase the practical utility of research and develop methods of utilizing existing data to answer pressing questions. Studies carried out under these partnerships are expected to have clear relevance for child care policies, practices, and the well-being of children and families. These projects should also contribute to the development of methodological strategies which do not require the launching of large-scale studies in order to provide valid, reliable and important findings.

#### *B. Cooperative Agreements*

The Child Care Research Partnerships are being funded as cooperative agreements in order to facilitate a high degree of coordination between projects and to accommodate the flexibility in project design needed to carry out collaborative research. In applying for financial assistance under this announcement, applicants agree to enter into a cooperative agreement with the ACYF Child Care Bureau. The general roles of research partners and Federal staff are outlined in the following sections. Specific terms and conditions of each cooperative agreement will be negotiated prior to award of funds.

##### *1. The Grantee Role*

The grantee is the official applicant to whom a financial assistance award is made. The grantee is responsible for the performance of its subgrantees or subcontractors, and for ensuring that agreements with co-partners are carried out in good faith and to a high level of quality. The grantee is expected to

participate and cooperate fully with the Child Care Bureau in carrying out the Child Care Research Partnership detailed in the cooperative agreement. The specific terms of each agreement will be based on this announcement, the successful applicant's proposal, and related items to be negotiated prior to award.

Each of the Child Care Research Partnerships will participate as a member of an ACYF Child Care Research Consortium to be formed shortly after projects are funded. The goals of this consortium are four-fold: (1) To coordinate and assist the individual research partnerships; (2) to produce a more sophisticated and comprehensive body of research than would be achievable by any project alone; (3) to provide a forum for consideration of technical issues which are of mutual concern to the researchers; and (4) to assist ACYF in the development of research strategies to effectively examine complex child care issues. As part of this effort, two meetings of the consortium will be held in Washington, D.C., the first shortly after funds are awarded and the second in the spring of 1996.

##### *2. The Federal Role*

The Federal Project Officer (FPO) will work closely with each of the individual Child Care Research Partnerships and with the ACYF Child Care Research Consortium to share priorities and plans, identify and resolve common issues, and ensure that final plans and products comprehensively address the goals of this announcement. Such involvement may include, but is not limited to: (1) provision of technical assistance to grantees; (2) consultation on and participation in formulation of research plans; (3) arrangement of meetings to support research activities; (4) membership in policy, planning, steering or other working groups established to facilitate accomplishment of the project goals; (5) review of major activities and products; and (6) participation in negotiations for revised cooperative agreements to carry out each succeeding phase of the research. The FPO will also chair meetings of the ACYF Child Care Research Consortium and will coordinate consortium activities and information sharing.

#### **Part IV. Project Narrative Statement**

The Project Narrative Statement provides most of the information on which proposals will be competitively reviewed. This section should be carefully developed in accordance with the research goals and expectations described in Part III, the evaluation

criteria and selection factors described in Part V, and the requirements described in sections A through D below.

The Project Narrative sets forth the technical proposal and how it will be carried out. This statement should be organized according to the evaluation criteria contained in Part V as follows: (1) Issues and Objectives; (2) Background and Significance; (3) Technical Approach; and (4) Staff Background and Organizational Capacity.

The clarity and conciseness of proposals are of the utmost importance to ACYF. Project Narrative Statements may not exceed 80 pages single-spaced (160 pages double-spaced) with standard one-inch margins and 10-12 point fonts. This page limitation applies to the entire Project Narrative Statement, including text, tables, charts, graphs, resumes, corporate statements and appendices. Excess pages of Project Narrative will not be reviewed. (Note: Applicants are asked to print their statement in double-spaced format for ease of review.)

##### *A. Issues and Objectives*

Applicants must demonstrate a sound understanding of the goals of this announcement and show how their proposed research would address ACYF's child care research objectives. Applicants should discuss the purpose of their research and indicate how their project would address major issues and hypotheses. This section should also describe how the study would relate to, or build upon, other relevant research.

Applicants should describe how the proposed project could fit into a broader framework for collaborative child care research, and suggest specific substudies or components which could be undertaken as part of a holistic approach made possible by a research consortium. In this regard, applicants must describe the nature of their research partnership, articulate a rationale for this partnership vis-a-vis ACYF research goals, and provide assurances that they and their partners have the willingness and flexibility to collaborate with other members of the ACYF Child Care Research Consortium.

##### *B. Background and Significance*

The Background and Significance section is intended to demonstrate the applicant's understanding of (1) critical child care issues affecting low-income families and the complex interrelationships among major variables; (2) the significance of these issues and variables for child care policies and programs; (3) how existing