PA-500 – Philadelphia

2013 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program
Ranking Process Document

Ranking Process Summary

The process for ranking projects for funding in the 2013 competition is summarized as follows:

1. Renewal Project applications were solicited in June, 2013 by the Office of Supportive Housing (OSH, the Collaborative Applicant), following a revamping of the local application and scoring tool done by a Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee. A Request for Proposals (RFP) for New Projects was released by OSH in August, 2013.

2. New and Renewal Project responses were reviewed by volunteer members of the Renewal Review and New Projects Committees as described in the Local Application Funding Process, and were scored using a tool developed by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee. (See Local Application Process and Renewals Review Guide and Scoring Instrument below)

3. Reviewers scored each renewal proposal independently and submitted the scores to OSH. Scores were tabulated and distributed, and projects were ranked by average score for purposes of the face-to-face discussion with reviewers. Information from July 2013 Site Visits at renewal projects based on 2012 low scores was provided at this meeting, which was held on August 2, 2013. New project proposals were reviewed in October, 2013 by an volunteer committee, although the CA could not guarantee funding would be available.

4. The CoC has had a long-standing commitment to rank Permanent Housing renewal projects higher than Transitional Housing renewal projects, with the exception of underperforming Permanent Housing projects, which are ranked below the Transitional Housing renewals. This was upheld in the 2013 competition.

5. As defined in the Policy for Underperforming Projects, adopted by the Strategic Planning Committee in June, 2012, those projects with consistently low average scores in the renewal review are subject to development of an Action Plan which is shared with the Strategic Planning Committee. Given HUD's message that there would be inadequate funding for all renewals, the Committee requested that underperforming projects (those scoring 70 or below in the 2013 renewal competition) make presentations regarding deficiencies and corrective action at the December 9, 2013 Strategic Planning Committee meeting. The purpose of this presentation is to increase the accountability of the grantees; and ensure that program and leadership staff at the agency where the low performing project resides understand the specificity of the deficiencies, and the severity of the potential consequences of not being renewed in the future; and actively identify and monitor corrective action.

6. The CA and Strategic Planning Committee worked with individual agencies and requested HUD approval, when appropriate, for changes already in the works (e.g. one low performing grantee requested a change in grantee, supported by the CoC, which was approved by HUD during this time period).

7. Two projects whose average scores were low due to poor application quality (as opposed to performance deficiencies) were requested to resubmit renewal applications, which were rescored and re-ranked for CoC review. One Transitional Housing project that requested conversion to Permanent Housing effective in this competition, but which HUD did not respond, was ranked at the bottom of the Permanent Housing projects.

8. First Time Renewals - Because the primary basis for reviewing and scoring renewal applications is performance data from the APRs, and first time renewals have often not been operating long enough to have a year of performance data, first time renewals are not reviewed by the Renewals Review Committee. First time renewals are placed in Tier 1 below the reviewed renewals, but above low performing renewals.

9. Review of the NOFA – Review of the NOFA issued November 22, 2013 impacted the ranking of the Permanent Supportive Housing projects. The New Project Request for Proposals was issued in and included a requirement to serve "individuals or families who are chronically and/or long-term homeless." The NOFA's emphasis on those meeting the strict definition of chronic homelessness, and on Housing First projects, resulted in the recommendation of a new 30-unit Housing First rental assistance project to be administered by the City of Philadelphia. Funding for Housing First services was committed to the project by the City after the New Project application process was completed.

10. On December 30, 2013, the Collaborative Applicant (OSH) conducted a CoC-wide meeting to provide details regarding the NOFA, the policy priorities described by HUD, and prospective strategies for closing the gap caused by reduced HUD funding. OSH, with Strategic Planning Committee approval, was able to accrue savings and funding for 1 new project by eliminating two service projects, reducing services that were cost-shifted to the County's Medicaid behavioral health managed care organization, and conservatively reducing rental assistance project rents below the FMR, when merited, based on three years of actual spending.

11. Approval of the proposed ranking and funding strategy was requested at the governing board meeting (Strategic Planning Committee) on January 13, 2014. The Committee voted to move the two renewal projects described above back down in the rank order to reflect their original average scores. The Committee unanimously approved the ranking and funding scenario as revised, including 3 new project applications.

12. On January 15, 2014, HUD provided clarifying information regarding the Planning Grants, requiring that the CoC request funding in this year's competition. This resulted in the elimination of the lowest ranked new project. The revised ranking and funding scenario was approved unanimously by the Strategic Planning Committee on January 21, 2013.

13. On January 17, 2014, OSH notified all project applicants in writing, outside of the esnaps system, whether they would be included in the CoC competition or not; and if not, the

reason for the rejection and the provision regarding appeal (24 CFR 578.35 (b). Notification was provided to each recipient for their project(s) in individualized letters signed by the CA, which were scanned and emailed. Letters included the project rank and funding allocation for projects to be included in the CoC application.

14. The revised ranking and funding strategy was transmitted to the Strategic Planning Committee on January 29, 2014, for their final approval.

Local Application Process for Continuum of Care Projects

In order to be considered for inclusion in the City of Philadelphia's Continuum of Care Consolidated Application, local agencies must respond to one or both of the 2013 CoC Homeless Assistance RFPs being issued: Continuum of Care Program Renewals and Request for Proposals for New Projects. Proposals received timely will first be reviewed by City staff to establish whether they pass threshold requirements. All proposals that pass threshold requirements will be reviewed by a local review committee, and, if accepted, ranked for order of inclusion in Philadelphia's Consolidated Application.

The CoC Program Renewals Review Committee and New Projects Review Committee are volunteer panels convened solely for reviewing and ranking proposals. The purpose is to:

- Conduct a review of each application;
- Consistently and independently evaluate each application against defined criteria;
- Rank each proposal in order of most responsive / effective to least; and
- Provide recommendations to the CoC staff and the Strategic Planning Committee who give ultimate approval regarding whether a proposal should be submitted for funding and how it should be ranked against other proposals.

Conflict of Interest

Every effort is made to avoid conflict, or the appearance thereof, when selecting members to participate as part of the Review Committee.

The proposals assigned to each reviewer are sent before the Review Committee meeting takes place. Reviewers are asked to determine whether a conflict of interest exists with any application that has been assigned to them for review, before they score the materials. If it is determined that a conflict or the appearance of a conflict exists, the proposal will be assigned to another reviewer and a replacement proposal will be provided.

A conflict of interest can be defined as: an actual or perceived interest by a review committee member in an action which results or appears to result in personal, organizational, or professional gain. This may involve a direct or indirect financial or other interest in a decision of the planning body. Examples of possible conflicts of interest include cases where a reviewer:

- Is employed or has a formal association with an agency that has submitted an application;
- Has recently served as a consultant for an applicant agency;
- Is named as a potential consultant or subcontractor in the application; or
- Has extensive knowledge about the application or proposed project and is unable to objectively review the application.

Confidentiality
Each individual who agrees to participate in the review process agrees to abide by requirements for confidentiality before, during, and after the review process. Adherence to confidentiality is critical to the integrity of the review process and the protection of reviewers who are evaluating proposals that were submitted by their peers. The following confidentiality requirements must be respected:

- All information related to the proposals should be kept in strict confidence;
- Impressions or judgments concerning the proposals are not to be discussed or shared with anyone prior to, during, or after the review committee's deliberations (exceptions: discussions with other review committee members during committee deliberations, and Committee chair and staff discussions at the Executive Committee meeting);
- The proposals, as well as the ideas, concepts, methods, or techniques included in the proposals are to be considered proprietary, and all rights thereby implied are to be respected;
- Proposals, in part or whole, are not to be photocopied; and
- Questions about any specific proposals are not to be directed to the applicant organization, or to a consultant who assisted in the preparation of the application.

Reviewers must adhere to the following requirements during and after the Review Committee meeting:

- Statements and notes of the reviewers should not be shared with anyone outside the review committee;
- Discussions concerning any specific application are to be confined to the review committee meeting room;
- Proceedings of the review committee are to be kept in strict confidence; and
- Proposals and review materials are to be left with the Office of Supportive Housing staff at the conclusion of the review session.

Roles and Responsibilities of Review Committee Members
Chairperson – The Chairperson, typically a member of the McKinney Public/Private Strategic Planning Committee, is appointed by the City and presides over the review to facilitate discussion and support the complete and impartial review of each proposal.

Staff Representative(s) – The Staff Representative(s) assist the Chairperson by providing needed documents, program policy information, and regulatory guidance. The Staff Representative(s) are responsible for collecting the Score Sheets and Review Instruments and documenting the proceedings.

Reviewers – Reviewers are responsible for reviewing each assigned proposal, completing the Review Instruments and Score Sheets, and coming to the Review Committee meeting prepared to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal read.

Renewal Application Details

During the month of May, there were a series of meetings with an ad hoc Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee for the purpose of reviewing and revising the CoC Renewal Application.

On Friday, June 7, 2013, the CA sent the revised 2013 CoC Renewal Application and Review Instrument to the McKinney Providers in preparation for a mandatory CoC Renewal Briefing. The Renewal Briefing took place on Monday, June 10th, 2013 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. This briefing was to allow the McKinney Providers the opportunity to hear about the renewal process, see in advance the entire renewal application, and receive copies of the scoring tool to be used by Reviewers.

On Monday, June 10th invitations were sent to potential reviewers to secure enough reviewers to have the application scored four (4) times. The CoC Renewal Review Committee materials were distributed to 47 reviewers from within the CoC both private and public organizations.

Reviewers had from Wednesday, July 17th through Wednesday, July 31st, 2013 to review and score their projects. The scores were placed into a ranking document based on their overall average. The CoC Renewal Review Committee convened on Friday, August 2nd, 2013 to discuss the overall scores, comments, site visit results, and reach consensus on an overall ranking.

Site Visits

As established by the Strategic Planning Committee in its Policy for Underperforming Projects, projects with low average scores are subject to site visit, performed by OSH staff. At a site visit, staff reviews: the facility, the unit, verification of homelessness, and client files. The site visits were conducted by Shelter Plus Care Analysts and McKinney Project Manager in July of 2013.

New Project Application Details

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for Permanent Supportive Housing Projects for Vulnerable and/or Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families was issued on August 15th, 2013. There was a pre-proposal conference on Tuesday, August 20th, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. hosted by the Office of Housing and Community Development and the Office of Supportive Housing.

A mailing to all interested organizations, as well as our current providers was conducted prior to issuance of the RFP. All proposals were due on Thursday, September 19th, 2013 by 5:00 p.m.

All proposals must have been submitted electronically as well through the eContract Philly online application process at www.phila.gov/contracts. Applicants who failed to file complete applications through eContract Philly online application process would not be considered for the contract.

The Office of Supportive Housing & McKinney Strategic Planning Committee Policy for Underperforming HUD SHP & S+C Renewal Projects

Under HEARTH, performance and compliance are significant parts of the competitive process. It is our responsibility to review expenditure of funds and performance of all funded agencies.

Therefore, the Office of Supportive Housing along with the McKinney Strategic Planning Committee, which is the primary decision-making body for the annual McKinney process, have established this policy to address consistently underperforming HUD SHP & S+C renewal projects, effective beginning in the 2012 competition.

An underperforming project is one whose renewal proposal, reviewed by neutral reviewers during the annual renewal process, scores an average of 70 points or below; or a project which the Review Committee reaches identifies a major concern and reaches consensus to classify the project as "underperforming." The scores are based on the following criteria:

- **Project Description** - Project Description clearly defines the population and services offered, as well as case studies to consider.
- **Project Performance** – Project Capacity Rate: above 90%; Increase in Income, Employment: 23% left with it; Mainstream Resources and Housing Stability: PH is 81%; TH to PH is 67%. (all based upon the APR data)
- **Overall Responsiveness** to the RFP
- **Facilities Maintenance (monitored through site visits)**
- **Data Quality Measures**

If the renewal project is identified as "underperforming" for two consecutive competition years, then the following process will occur:

a.) You or someone from your organization will be asked to attend the next scheduled McKinney Strategic Planning Committee to address the review committee concerns.
b.) Your organization will have sixty (60) days from that meeting to write an Action Plan addressing their concerns.
c.) A site visit will be conducted by OSH to view both the living quarters and the documentation during that sixty (60) day period as well as interview program participants.
d.) Your organization will submit the Action Plan to OSH for review to ensure that all concerns were addressed.
e.) Your agency will be requested to return to the McKinney Strategic Planning Committee to share your Action Plan.
f.) The Action Plan will be monitored up until the beginning of the next McKinney Renewal cycle to ensure that the concerns are properly addressed and improving.
g.) If for any reason, both the McKinney Strategic Planning Committee and/or OSH Executive Team should decide that the program has not improved then a recommendation will be made to terminate your program's funding for the upcoming year.

All programs determined to be underperforming will be given the opportunity to receive technical assistance (e.g., help from a sister agency)

Drafted 2/10/12; Adopted 06/10/12

City of Philadelphia – Office of Supportive Housing
2013 Federal Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs
CoC GRANT RENEWALS REVIEW GUIDE and INSTRUMENT TO PROPOSALS

Agency Name:_____ Project / Program Name:_____

Project Category: __TH __PH __Safe Haven Date Reviewed:_____

Reviewer's Name:_____

TOTAL SCORE (out of 100):	**OVERALL RECOMMENDATION**: Please select one of the following designations after completing your review of the proposal:
_____	_____ Recommended for funding (75-100 pts) _____ Recommended with reservations (51-74 pts) _____ Not recommended for funding (0-50 pts)

I. Project Description & II. Participants

Criteria	**Point Value**
Project description clearly describes the type of housing, number of clients, target populations served, and supportive services provided. The project participant's chart is fully consistent with the description.	8-10
Project description provides a brief description of the population served and services provided. The project participant's chart is somewhat consistent with the description.	5-7
Project description is lacking in content and does not present a clear picture of the project for reviewer. The project participant's chart is not consistent with the description.	0-4

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

III. Case Study

Criteria	**Point Value**
One case study of client challenges was provided. The individual described is representative of the target population. The case clearly illustrates efforts made by the housing and service providers to address the client's identified issues/needs. The outcome is clear.	8-10
Case study briefly highlights efforts made by both the housing and service providers to address the client's identified issues/needs and client's outcomes are clear.	5-7
Case study is lacking in content and does not present a clear picture of client challenges and staff interventions.	0-4

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

IV. Performance Data (refer to the attached Excel spreadsheet)

1. Data Quality Use the "% Don't Know/Refused" and "% Missing" columns (highlighted in yellow) for review

Local Standard: 10% or less Don't Know/Refused and Missing Values for each of the data elements.

Criteria	**Point Value**

Most of the data elements had 10% or less Don't Know/Refused and Missing Values and/or supplied sound explanation and plan to cure if the goal was not achieved.	8-10
Only a few of the data elements had 10% or less Don't Know/Refused and Missing Values	5-7
None of the data elements had 10% or less Don't Know/Refused and Missing Values and/or there is no explanation for missing data.	0-4

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

2. Unit Utilization Rates

Local standard: 90% or above for the 4 points in time. Reviewers may take into consideration that smaller programs will have lower utilization rates with one or two vacancies. In this instance, reviewers should take into account the responses given to the additional questions.

Criteria	**Point Value**
Unit Utilization Rate is **90%** or above for the 4 points in time.	8-10
Unit Utilization Rate is **75 – 89%** for 3-4 points in time.	5-7
Unit Utilization Rate is **below 75%** for 2-3 points in time.	0-4

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

3. *Residence Prior to Program Entry*

To score this section, note that participants in PH programs may come only from homeless situations (20a), or institutional stays of 90 days or fewer. Participants in TH programs may come from 20a or 20b and some of 20c depending on the circumstances.

Criteria	**Point Value**
Participants are coming from appropriate sources based on the program type. The majority of participants are coming from literally homeless situations (20a).	5-10
Participants come from eligible places based on the type of project (PH or TH). Some information is missing.	2-4
There is no consistency with the types of places where people are coming from; people appear to be coming from ineligible places (client owned or rental properties) or the percentage of those coming from "other", "don't know/refused" or "missing" is high.	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

4. **Client Monthly Cash-Income Amount**
Local Standard: 75% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) will have the ***same*** or ***more*** cash income.

Criteria	**Point Value**
75% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have the same or more cash income than at program entry.	3-5
70% - 74% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have the same or more cash income than at program entry. Explanation is sound.	2
69% or below of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have the same or more cash income than at program entry. Poor explanation or no explanation is given.	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 5)

5. Client Cash Income Sources
HUD/Local Standard: 20% of all Leavers (exiting adults) will have earned (employment) income;
To accommodate programs without any "Leavers", please review and score for both leavers and stayers.
Please consider the project's target population and potential challenges the population would have when seeking employment.

Criteria	**Point Value**
Percentage of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) with earned income met or exceeded **20%.**	5
17% - 19% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income.	4
13% - 16% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income.	2-3
Fewer than **13%** of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income.	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 5)

6. Non-Cash Benefit Sources

Local Standard: 88% of **Leavers and Stayers** will be connected to at least one mainstream benefit.
HUD Standard: 20% of Leavers will be connected to at least one mainstream benefit at exit.
Please review and score based on the Local Standard.

Criteria	**Point Value**
Based on the target population, the benefits attained by participants are appropriate.	4-5
Participants are connected to some benefits, but based on the population served, it is likely that more participants could be connected to additional benefits. Explanations, if provided, appear to be applicable.	2-3
Benefits don't appear to be appropriate and/or there is not adequate connection to benefits based on the population served. No explanation is given.	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 5)

REVIEWERS WILL SCORE QUESTION 7 (IF PH) OR QUESTION 8 (IF TH) BUT NOT BOTH

7. Length of Participation – PERMANENT HOUSING PROGRAMS ONLY
Local Standard: 85% of all participants (Leavers and Stayers) will remain in the program for at least 6 months.

Criteria	**Point Value**
85% or more of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months	4-5
75% - 84% or more of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months	2-3
74% or more of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 5)

8. Destination – TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMS ONLY

Local Standard: 72% of participants will exit to permanent housing
If no leavers, score "0". This is in recognition of HUD's emphasis on reducing the average length individuals and families experience homelessness. While residing in a transitional housing program, individuals and families are still considered to be homeless as they are not in a permanent housing situation.

Criteria	**Point Value**
72% or more of all leavers exited to a permanent destination.	4-5
65 - 71% of all leavers exited to a permanent destination.	2-3
64 % or less of all leavers exited to a permanent destination.	0-1

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 5)

9. Destination – ALL PROGRAMS

Criteria	**Point Value**
Based on the target population, most destinations for exiting participants are positive.	8-10
Destinations are a mix of stable housing and/or treatment; and unstable situations, e.g. shelter or streets, or the information is missing/other.	5-7
There is not adequate information about where people went when they left, or the destinations are primarily unstable. Inadequate or no explanation is provided.	0-4

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 10)

Bonus Points Section

Up to 5 additional points may be awarded for the following

To score this section, please refer to I. Project Description and 5B. Project participants – Subpopulations in the Renewal Application.

1. The proposal serves priority target populations, including chronic homeless individuals, veterans, and victims of domestic violence.
2. There is evidence that the project seeks to serve the individuals/families who are the longest time homeless and/or require the most intensive assistance.

Reviewer Score: _____ (max points = 5)

Overall responsiveness to RFP /Explanations and plans to address deficiencies

This section may be used to account for reviewers' discretion. Examples may be: to provide additional points for projects that had no participants who exited and therefore could not be scored in sections; for programs in which a reviewer assesses that the there are mitigating factors in cases where goals were not achieved, and for first time renewals in which information may not be available yet for review.

Questions to Consider:

- After reviewing the full proposal, do you have a clear understanding of the target population and the program structure?
- Does the provider/proposal demonstrate an understanding of the performance data and describe circumstances that impacted performance, if applicable?
- If performance standards were not met, does proposal indicate clear and sound methods to improve?
- Are narrative descriptions of extenuating circumstances/challenges convincing?
- Accomplishments description.

Criteria	**Point Value**
Very clear, complete proposal – easy to understand the program structure and population served. Data is complete and if there are narrative explanations, they are clear and convincing. If participants exited the program, most destinations are positive. Those who remained appeared to be on track for positive outcomes (same/increased income, connection to mainstream benefits).	11-15
Fairly clear proposal. Complete with some details.	6-10
Proposal unclear, sections or responses missing, hard to understand program or population to be served.	0-5

Reviewer Score: ____ (max. points = 15)