

**NWX-CNCS**

**Moderator: Tamika Becton  
September 22, 2015  
1:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. Our participants will be on listen-only mode until the question and answer session of today's conference. At that time if you wish to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star 1.

This conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I will now turn the conference over to Tamika Becton. Thank you and please begin.

Tamika Becton: Hi. Thank you, (Gabrielle). And welcome to our first Training Technical Assistance call for the 2016 RSVP Limited Geographical Area Competition.

As the operator said, my name is Tamika Becton and I'm the Management and Program Analyst here with Senior Corps at the Corporation for National and Community Service. We're also joined by Katharine Gregg, which is our Senior Program Officer.

So during this call we will provide a very brief overview of the Corporation for National Community Service and the RSVP Program to give you just some context for this competition. Then we will review the highlights of the

Notice of Funding Opportunities for the 2016 competition and show you the available resources on the Web site. At the end of this call, we will be able to take questions and answers.

So, a brief overview of CNCS is the mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service, or also known as CNCS, is to improve the lives and strengthen communities and foster service engagement through service and volunteering.

We accomplish this through our programs Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Social Innovation fund. Today we will be focusing on one of the Senior Corps programs - but you can also learn more about all of the programs by visiting our Web site at [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).

So now a brief overview of the RSVP to help you understand the program for which this competition's funds are going to be used for. RSVP is one of the three Senior Corps programs ran by the Corporation for National and Community Service. It actually began in 1971.

RSVP is one of the nation's largest organizations for volunteers, ages 55 and older. Each year we have roughly 296,000 RSVP volunteers serving through about 680-plus projects throughout the country.

RSVP in your community. For this competition if your organization is to be awarded through the grant, your organization would be responsible for implementing the RSVP project in the awarded service area.

You will likely use the grant funds to hire an RSVP director to run the RSVP program at your organization, which would now be known as the RSVP sponsor organization. And in your application, you will have explained the

needs in your community and how you would recruit and place RSVP volunteers in the community to make an impact on meeting those community needs. The organizations in which the service activities where you will place RSVP volunteers to serve with are known as RSVP volunteer stations.

So with recruiting RSVP volunteers they are not committed to a certain volunteer schedule, so that is the benefit of it. Some volunteers may serve once every few weeks. Others may consistently put in the 20 hours a week. RSVP provides volunteers a large amount of flexibility with their volunteer schedules.

Now the service activity options for RSVP are also very flexible. The volunteers can serve in a variety of activities and they can choose the activity offered that is best for them. Activities might include renovating low-income housing, teaching English to immigrants, assisting victims of natural disaster, or recruiting and managing other volunteers, or tutoring children.

RSVP volunteers do not receive a stipend or educational award for their service as other national service participants may, but instead RSVP volunteers receive other benefits. They are covered by accidental personal liability and certain - excuse me - certain access automobile liability insurance while they are serving. So they also - they can also receive recognition from the RSVP project. And depending on your RSVP project budget, then they also help them receive a meal while serving and then some transportation reimbursement for travel to and from their volunteer service.

Earlier I did mention that the volunteer stations - and these are where the RSVP volunteers would serve. They would need to be spread out through the entire geographic service area for your RSVP program. And they can be a number of - they can be non-profit organizations, propriety healthcare

facilities, public agencies. If your RSVP formally works with the volunteer stations under a signed MOU, Memorandum of Understanding, and your RSVP project would assign RSVP volunteers to that particular volunteer station. So when you think about the minimum number of volunteers for the opportunity for which you are applying and considering how many volunteer stations will be needed to place all of the RSVP volunteers.

Your sponsor organization can also serve as an RSVP volunteer station. However if the RSVP volunteers are serving in administrative or supportive positions at the sponsor organizations, no more than 5% of the total number of RSVP volunteers can serve in that assignment.

So - and the last bullet is the community serve; is also involved in RSVP - in the RSVP project, and that would be the RSVP Advisory Council. And so the Advisory Council is recruited individuals from the community to serve on the Advisory Council. And their role and subset is up to your RSVP program, but many of - many Advisory Councils assist and assess the community needs, resource development and volunteer recognition.

So on Page 16 of the Notice, which we'll look at later, it includes a link to the RSVP regulations, which have a list of prohibited activities for RSVP. And I just listed a few here on the side. And that would be RSVP volunteers cannot replace staff -- paid staff.

They cannot have volunteer activities that are political in nature, including influencing elections or voter registration activities. RSVP volunteers cannot give religious instruction, conduct worship service, or engage in any form of (unintelligible) as part of their duties. Also the sponsors cannot use grant funds directly or indirectly to finance labor or anti-labor organization, or related activities.

So here is some examples of possible budget items for an RSVP program. And these funds can be used to hire a full-time RSVP director, to set up recognition events for RSVP volunteers and recruiting RSVP volunteers.

So funds can be used to communicate with RSVP volunteers and stations through newsletters or for the RSVP director to actually travel to meet with volunteer station staff throughout the geographic servicing area. The funds can also be used for RSVP director to travel to CNCS in training events and other relevant training opportunities.

Now all of the grants are subject to Uniform Administrative Requirements, and it's also known as the Uniform Guidance. And that can be found on the Federal Register Web site, which you see a picture of right here. And you will also find the links on Page 15 in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. And these - the Uniform Guidance contains the OMB cost principles that do tell allowable expenses for the budget.

So, the next section covers criminal history checks. For RSVP programs, only RSVP staff are the only ones that are required to have a criminal history check. And the criminal history checks are an allowable budget item, so these expenses may be fingerprints or state criminal history checks. And those fingerprints are required for any staff hired on or after April 21, 2011 that has reoccurring access to vulnerable populations. So, the state criminal history checks are required for anyone hired on or after October 1, 2009.

Many of these projects have staff that have been with them prior to those dates, so you would not have criminal history checks in the budget. So just make sure that the criminal history checks are not - just to reiterate, the criminal history checks are not required for RSVP volunteers but it is an

allowable expense. So - and I did provide the Web site right here for additional resources found on the Knowledge Network about the criminal history checks.

So the Code of Federal Regulations is actually 45 Part 2553. And it's the source of requirements for RSVP. So if you are considering applying for an RSVP grant please, please ensure that you please read the CFR for RSVP.

So next we're going to kind of go over the highlights of the Notice of Funding. And please keep in mind that these are only the highlights and listening to this webinar is not a substitute for reading the entire NOFA in detail, as well as the grant application instructions, the Frequently Asked Questions document, and any other technical assistant resources.

So there are two key dates associated with the notice. The due date for the Notice of Intent to Apply is actually Tuesday, September 29, 2015. And the Notice of Intent, it can be just a simple email. It's not required but it is very highly encouraged.

But you send that to 2016RSVPIntent@cns.gov as you can see right here. And when you're sending that email just make sure that you're including the opportunity number and what you are proposing to serve, how you heard about the RSVP competition, the name of the applicant organization, the address, the contact person, and the phone number in your Notice of Intent. And the second date is actually when the application is due and that's Tuesday, November 3 by 5:00 pm Eastern time.

So eligible applicants -- here are a list of the eligible applicants that are able to apply for funding. Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime or they engage in lobbying activities are not eligible to apply for funding. And

previously receiving federal funds is not a prerequisite for submitting the application for this competition.

So the application requirements, which is also established in the notice, must serve the entire geographic service area associated with the funding opportunity for which they are applying.

And to support the minimum number of volunteers associated with the funding opportunity, as well as all applications must meet the national performance measure requirements and other criteria established in the funding opportunity. And we want to make sure that we're minimizing disruption to the current volunteers associated with any incumbent projects.

Yes. So information about the opportunity number and the start date, the geographic service area, and the minimum number of volunteers in the outcome days, assignments, and the funding amount are located in the Appendix A. We will actually go over that later when we look at the Web site itself.

But each opportunity in Appendix A is identified by an opportunity number, such as AL-01, which will indicate the first opportunity in Alabama. So any eligible organization can apply for any opportunity in Appendix A. Later in the session we will actually – I will actually show you exactly what I'm talking about.

So I did mention that our previous submission requirements for all applications for this competition, they must meet the national performance measures. And I - we're actually going to have two training and technical assistance calls specifically geared for the national performance measures, but I just wanted to bring that to your attention as well. But two - one of the

documents that you'll probably be referring to a lot is Appendix B and I'll definitely show you that as well on the Web site.

So with the national performance measures there are six CNCS focus areas in which RSVP volunteers may serve. For those are RSVP volunteers serving in the education focus area. Some examples they will - they would be able - there are some of the service areas that they would be able to do is provide support or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improve educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged people, especially children and for children with special or exceptional needs.

So in the healthy futures focus area, they may assist with meeting health needs within the community and this could include access to care, aging in place, and childhood obesity.

With the veterans and military families focus area, the service activity is focused on the impact of - the positive impact of the quality of life of veterans and improved military family strength.

For environmental stewardship, their service areas include supporting increased citizen behavioral change leading to increase efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements, particularly for economically disadvantaged households.

And for economic opportunity, this service area provides support or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic wellbeing and the security of economically disadvantaged individuals.

And the last one is disaster services. And this focus area helps individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate disasters.



Now capacity building is not one of the six focus areas but RSVP volunteers may serve in capacity building work plans. And these capacity-building activities are in direct - activities that allow the organization - that allows RSVP volunteers to serve and provide more and better sustained direct service maybe after their terms have expired or after they completed volunteering. However, the capacity building opportunities cannot solely support the administration or operations of the organization, so that is very key.

Now the target period for our grants for this competition is three years. The funding amount listed in Appendix A is for year one of the three-year project period. Grants are eligible for continuation funding for two year - for the additional two years out of the three, as long as they demonstrate satisfactory performance that indicates that the grant is on track to exceed the proposed performance measures at the end of your three-year period.

And they have to demonstrate the capacity to manage the grant, as well as they've got to make sure they're in compliance with the grant requirements. And this includes the terms and conditions of the grant and the requirement of biannual reporting of performance measures, and securing the required non-federal share of the budget. And then also the availability of Congressional appropriations.

So now we're going to get into the application submitting. All applications will be submitted through eGrants, which is our online grant submission system. And we recommend that you begin the process of submitting your application in eGrants early, creating that eGrants account, and beginning the application at least three weeks prior to the deadline is ideal. We also recommend starting your application as a word processing document, so we

want Microsoft Word and other word processing software, and then copying and pasting it into eGrants no later than ten days prior to the deadline.

The national service hotline is available to answer your questions. I did provide the phone number as well as the - the contact link for submitting your questions if you have any technical questions related to eGrants. Then the hours for the rest of September are Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm Eastern Time and then in October and November the hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Also when you're submitting your application, you want to also submit all of the required attachments by the application due date. When working on your application please keep in mind that RSVP must be included in the project title and must be used in promoting the project throughout the duration of the project period.

Now I mentioned about the required documents and attachments. The list of required attachments can be found in Part 4 in the Grant Application Instructions. And so the documents that you would be required to submit you will be submitting them to this email address at [2016rsvpattachments@cns.gov](mailto:2016rsvpattachments@cns.gov). And in the subject line you will make sure that you want to include the application ID and the opportunity number that you would be applying for -- that geographic service area that you'll be applying for. If you are the incumbent please indicate that as well in your email.

So the application page limit is 15 pages as they print from eGrants. This includes the executive summary, the project narratives, and the cover page of the face sheet. It does include the budget or the national performance measure work plans. But we do encourage you to check the principle version of your

application in eGrants prior to submitting so you know that you are within the page limits. Reviewers will stop reading applications after Page 15, so make sure that you're checking eGrants before submitting. There is a button to be able to print the application in eGrants before submitting to ensure that you're in - within that page limit.

So the - one of the other things is in the application, you're also going to include the required non-federal share. So in year one of the project the required non-federal share is 10% of the total project budget. And in year two of the project the non-federal share will increase to 20% of the total project budget. And in year three and subsequent years the required non-federal share will be 30% of the total project budget. So current RSVP grantees are required to have the 30% non-federal share only when they are applying for the opportunity where they are the incumbent. If they are not the incumbent, then you would only have to meet the 10% share.

Applications must include a DUNS Number as well as the EIN -- the Employer Identification Number. And all applicant organizations must be registered with the Systems for Award Management, or SAM. And we urge you to begin this registration process as soon as possible. And you'll be able to see in Page - on Page 7 in the Notice, we'll have the links and the information in regards to signing up and registering for that.

CNCS may consider an application after the deadline but only if you submit an email explaining the extenuating technical circumstances which caused the delay. Advance requests to consider late applications will not be considered. So the email that I have right here is the one that you would send. And it must be sent within 24 hours after the deadline.

So getting into the application selection criteria. So all of the applications will be assessed against the 16-question selection criteria in the notice. And here you will see that the selection criteria's - and their respective weights. So the program design as you can see is worth 50% with a subcategory of the strengthening communities and recruitment and development. As well as the organizational capacity is 30% with a subcategory of program management and organizational capability. And then the last category is cost effectiveness and budget advocacy, which is worth 20%.

Now each selection criterion will be assessed on an excellent/good/fair and does not meet and a yes/no. So - and you will - you can see on Page 10 through 12 in the Notice for the list of all of the selection criteria questions.

Now the stages in the review process are that first is going to be the compliance review. And in this, CNCS staff will review all of the applications to determine if they are compliant. And next we will have a panel of external and staff - and CNCS staff reviewers that will assess the applications for - based on the selection criteria.

Now the results will be reviewed for fairness and consistency. And some applications may be selected for quality control assessment. Now we - if an applicant is proposing evidence-based programming in their application, there will actually be an external - external reviewer that will be reviewing that portion of the application if an applicant is proposing to - evidence-based program.

Now in their risk assessment evaluation, that's where CNCS will evaluate the risk of the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to assure that an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. And

during clarification, applications - applicants may refuse requests to provide clarifying information to resolve questions and issues.

And finally, the CEO selects the final portfolio based on the results of the review and selection process. And also following the grant awards each applicant will receive a summary of feedback pertaining to their application.

Now there are a number of technical assistant resources that are going to be available to you and they are listed in the notice. But we would like to highlight a few of them on this call. So any questions that you have can be submitted to 2016rsvp@cns.gov. And all the answers to the submitted questions will be added to the FAQ, or the frequently asked questions document, posted on the notice Web site.

And additional technical assistance calls will be held while this competition is open. And the dates and times for those calls are also listed on the Web site. And you will also be able to have the WebEx link and the replay numbers for after the technical assistance calls as well. Those will be posted within a day or two.

So now we're going to go ahead - let's go ahead and visit the notice Web site. Just to kind of show you all the Web site in itself. So this is the nationalservice.gov Web site. We will type in the rsvpcompetition right here. And this will be the Notice Web site.

And here we're going to - you have a table of contents. And this is probably the most common place that you're going to find anything that has to do with the Notice and the RSVP competition. So this will be updated frequently, so I would definitely check this as much as possible because this pretty much has

all of the information that you will need to submit a grant application for the RSVP program.

So the table of contents, the application deadline -- we've already covered that. The funding opportunity and application exceptions, so I'm going to click on that. And I'm actually going to show you all this section too; is where this is the notice of funding opportunity. This is the RSVP grant application instructions. This will be the appendices that go with the NOFO so - or the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

So I'm going to click on Appendix A because these are the available funding opportunities for this competition. These are the only opportunities that are available for this competition. I do want to make sure that that is - oh - that everyone is aware of that. So these are the service areas that - opportunity numbers that are available for this competition.

And Appendix B, this has the list of the national performance measures. These are the instructions. So this is the - within those six focus areas it breaks down the service activities and the strategic plan, and the objective, and the outcome. So whichever one you're proposing you definitely want to ensure that your - performance measures are aligned with this document.

The evidence-based programs. So if you are - which if you are proposing to serve evidence-based programs for additional money, this is definitely an appendix that you will want to look at just because this has the list of proposed evidence-based registries. So you want to make sure that this is aligned with what you are proposing in your grant application.

And terms and definitions is just the appendix for learning the quick terms or the terminology for RSVP.

The required documents. So in the grant application instructions, this section right here you'll - it will list - I'll actually click on it. And I'm just going to do a quick search for required documents. And we're going to scroll down to find the required documents. So right here.

So in eGrants you're going to have this list right here. But this is the list that you need to see which required documents are, like, go with your grant application. So this will be the list of things. And if you have a Yes, a No, Only Obtains, this will be the required document.

And these two are the only forms that you would actually complete. I know the Financial Management Survey is one that everybody will have to submit the Financial Management Survey, so that is one document that we provide for you, as well as the aggregated dollar amount of funding if that applies to your organization.

So Section 4 we have the Frequently Asked Questions document. And I did put the email address here just for convenience as well. But this document will be coming soon. The more questions we get we'll definitely be updating it as frequently as we can.

So the Resources for Applicants, this is eGrants. And I'm going to go ahead and click on this because this shows that - I have a pop-up blocker, clearly. But this is where - this is the system that you will be entering your grant application, as well as the RSVP program regulations. And this is definitely very - this one is very important because you want to make sure when you're submitting your grant application for funding, you want to make sure that you're complying with the regulations that RSVP has.

Now the Training and Technical Assistance, this is the times and the dates. It may be changed, so that's why I say you definitely want to ensure that you're - that you are checking this Web site very frequently.

Now the WebEx is clearly - I'm going - you just click on this link and you type in your name, and your email address, and then you're logged in. And the code is right here. So - and I will be updating this to show the replay, as well as the transcription and possibly the webinar replay as well. But we do have some upcoming ones. We have one next week.

We pretty much have one probably once or twice a week, so definitely ensure that this is - whichever one you're - I will recommend sitting on all of these just because they're all pertaining to a specific topic. Technical Assistance call 5 and 7 will be the exact same thing. But it's kind of going in and submitting that application in eGrants.

So that is all I have I believe. I'm going to make sure that - and so, yes. And so the application due date is actually Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 5:00 pm Eastern Time.

So, (Gabrielle), can you open the lines for questions?

Coordinator: Of course. At this time if you wish to ask a question please ensure your phone is unmuted, press star 1 and record your name when prompted. Again that is star 1 to ask a question. And those questions will take one moment to queue up. Please stand by.

And again it is star 1 to ask a question. One moment. I'm sure we currently have no questions.



Tamika Becton: Okay. Well thank you, (Gabrielle). And I'm actually going to just remember to, I guess, reiterate that the Web site is [www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition](http://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition) and that will be updated regularly, so I would definitely probably save it as a favorite. But if we don't have any more questions I just wanted to - actually, let's see. You might have a question coming in. Okay.

But if anybody has any questions, (Gabrielle), can you check and see if there's anybody else that has a late coming question?

Coordinator: Oh yes, of course. Again it is star 1 to ask a question. One moment.

I'm sure we have no questions.

Tamika Becton: Okay. Thank you so much, (Gabrielle). And thank you all for listening in on the first T&TA call for the RSVP competition. Thank you.

Coordinator: And with that we'll conclude today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect your lines at this time.

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