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Learning Systems International
Best Practices in Budget Development

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14:55:54 >>

14:55:54 [Music]

15:02:31 >> Welcome and on behalf of your AmeriCorps presentation team, I thank you for joining us.

15:02:31 Before starting let's review the technologies so you can get the most out of the training.

15:03:01 The audio for today's event is lecture only, the microphones are muted to reduce background noise.

15:03:01 To adjust the audio through your computer go to the bottom left of the screen, click the small arrow next to audio settings and select the speaker.

15:03:01 Some viewers get better audio while streaming while others get better quality by phone.

15:03:01 If you have any audio difficulties, you may want to try a different connection method.

15:03:01 Several Zoom features will be used today.

15:03:08 At the top of the screen Chat panel on the right side of the slides.

15:03:15 Use the Chat panel to receive links and resource information from the panelists or to share an idea.

15:03:28 When using Chat, please select everyone from the drop-down menu. This allows everyone to see your comments.

15:03:28 Use the Raise Hand feature if you have a technical issue and need assistance. I will contact you individually via Chat.

15:03:59 . Let's start this recording and turn it over to your presenter, Senior Grants Management Training Specialist and AmeriCorps Office of Grant Administration, Tracey Seabolt.

15:04:14 >> Recording of progress.

 Hello to the Best Practices in Budget Development webinar for AmeriCorps Seniors.

15:04:35 My goal for today's session is to help you, the AmeriCorps Seniors program applicants acquire the knowledge and skills needed to understand the function of and to develop an effective RSVP, Foster Grandparent.

15:04:48 Senior Companion, or Senior Demonstration Program budget and budget narrative. Your submission of a complete budget will help to demonstrate that you have the physical capacity to manage an AmeriCorps Seniors program.

15:04:59 During the session, I will review the budget components, which include both AmeriCorps resources and the applicant's matching resources.

15:05:19 I do want to point out that the AmeriCorps Seniors budget programs are all very similar, with slight differences between the stipend program budgets, that includes the Foster Grandparent.

15:05:24 Senior grandparent and some Senior Demonstration Program, and the non-stipend program budgets, which include some Senior Demonstration Programs and all RSVP programs.

15:05:39 I will reference those differences throughout the session, when applicable.

15:05:55 At the end of this webinar, you should understand how we determine if costs are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable as determined by 2 CFR 200, the Office of Management and Budget Aniform administrative Requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for Federal awards, which we refer to as the Uniform Guidance.

15:06:04 As well as the content of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, which is referred to either the NOFO or Notice.

15:06:14 Using these resources and tips and best practices shared here, you should be prepared to submit a compliant, compelling, and, competitive budget.

15:06:28 Because the budget and budget narrative becomes part of the grant recipients contract with AmeriCorps, we want, and we expect, applicants to present a strong and accurate document.

15:06:50 The approved budget will not only serve as a financial guide for grant-supported activities, but it also helps to ensure the terms and conditions of the award.

15:07:00 In addition to helping AmeriCorps monitor grant and financial compliance, it can serve as a tool for both AmeriCorps and award recipients to measure their progress toward the match requirements.

15:07:00 And monitor budgeted expenses to actual expenses, as part of the budget management process.

15:07:14 Before we dive into the details of the budget development, I want to point out that budget development is just one component of an effective budget management process.

15:07:14 Let's take a quick look at the full process.

15:07:29 As you started to work on your AmeriCorps Seniors application, you may have asked yourself, how do I design a strong budget?

15:07:52 Whether you started the process with that question or not, as part of the pre-award project development process, it's likely that your team already determined the needs you wanted to address with RSVP.

15:07:52 Foster Grandparent, Senior Companion or Senior Demonstration program resources.

15:07:52 And that you set up the program or project goals and objectives and you decided on a strategy to accomplish those goals.

15:08:08 To develop the budget, applicants must translate that strategy into dollars to prepare a budget that is aligned with the stated program goals and objectives.

15:08:16 Post award, grantees will continue to manage their budgets effectively by establishing a budget control process, monitoring expenses.

15:08:29 Regularly comparing your budgeted to actual expenses to check for over and under spending and modifying the budget as necessary with approval from AmeriCorps when required.

15:08:33 Today's conversation will focus on the budget preparation process.

15:08:52 Let's talk about an approved budget. It should be realistic. It should reflect the expected program revenues and expenses, and its capacity to carry out program activities.

15:08:52 It should be consistent and aligned with the program's goals and objectives.

15:09:06 The ones we just talked about in the prior slide.

15:09:06 And it should be flexible. A project's financial and operating circumstances often change, and the budget must adapt to those changing circumstances.

15:09:13 For now we will focus on the realistic and consistent features, as they relate to budget design.

15:09:24 A few minutes ago I outlined the steps that your team may have taken as part of the budget development process.

15:09:53 AmeriCorps encourages applicants to approach budget design as a team activity, engaging various departments based on their individual expertise. For instance, Human Resources will have salary, fringe benefits, and criminal history check costs.

15:09:53 The program office may know the cost for training, evaluation, and delivering services to the community.

15:10:03 The accounting office will have historical spending rates for specific costs. The grants office should be able to review for compliance as well as other staff may have additional expertise and can review the budget for clarity.

15:10:19 I do realize if you are part of a small organization, you may not have all of these resources available to you, but that doesn't mean you should undertake budget development in a vacuum without input from others.

15:10:32 Don't be afraid to involve others as required to present the most realistic data in the budget and make sure that your document aligns with your programmatic goals and objectives.

15:10:38 You may also want to have someone outside the budget development team review the budget, to make sure the content is clear and accurate.

15:10:49 AmeriCorps recommends that applicants use historical information when it is possible. As a reminder, your accounting department should have that information.

15:11:35 After obtaining this information, you will adjusted as necessary so the data is timelier and include that information, as appropriate, as part of your budget narrative descriptions.

15:11:35 Your strong budget design provides a framework for effective budget management and it ensures a realistic scope, appropriate detail, a competitive and compelling proposal, compliance, and effective delivery.

15:11:35 That is, it serves as a guide for program implementation.

15:11:37 In order to create a budget that is strong, accurate, and requires minimal clarification, I encourage you to take your time and engage others in data collection and quality review.

15:11:58 As I previously noted, one of the objectives for this session is to provide you with tips and tools for creating a compelling and compliant budget narrative.

15:12:09 The first step is to read and follow the application instructions in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and from now on I will reference that as the NOFO or Notice.

15:12:15 The strongest and most compliant Budget Narratives adhere to the guidelines in these documents and that saves all of us time and effort later.

15:12:33 These documents provide specific details related to budget compliance, including to become familiar with the Uniform Guidance and only include those costs that are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable.

15:12:44 You can find the Uniform Guidance online at ecfr.federalregister.gov and you will search under Title 2 Grants and Agreements.

15:13:01 After you and your team estimate the financial resources you need to achieve the stated program goals, you will then organize them into the narrative budget categories.

15:13:10 Again, following the guidance in the NOFO and application instructions. As you develop the budget narrative, remember to provide adequate descriptions and clear calculations.

15:13:20 eGrants will automatically populate a budget summary and a budget narrative report that should be able to serve as a stand-alone document.

15:13:32 Without a need to reference the application narrative for explanation. That is where that suggestion to have someone outside your budget review team review the document to check for holes and inaccuracies.

15:13:46 That comes in handy. The Uniform Guidance also specifies costs unallowable, such as lobbying, entertainment, and alcoholic beverages.

15:13:59 AmeriCorps strongly encourages applicants to review the Uniform Guidance to avoid including unallowable costs in your proposed budget.

15:14:12 Other unallowable costs include those that are not necessary to meet the program objectives. For example, budgeting a new laptop for each of your organizations eight staff members.

15:14:34 When only two staff are included in the budget, is not allowable and could be a waste, fraud, or abuse. Another example is budgeting $5000 for a top-of-the-line desktop computer with all kinds of fancy accessories for an employee who will primarily use a word processing program and email.

15:14:36 These are costs that would be considered unreasonable from a prudent person perspective or have no logic basis for inclusion in the budget.

15:14:53 I'm going to go into specifics for just a few minutes and speak to the minimum match requirements for AmeriCorps seniors stipended programs.

15:15:04 The Foster Grandparent or FGB, Senior Companion, SCP, and some Senior Demonstration Program's also referenced as SDP.

15:15:09 And I'll address the match requirements for the non-stipended program in just a moment.

15:15:26 The minimum match requirements for the SCP is 10% of the total project costs. Again, some SDP programs also may have a 10% match requirement.

15:15:32 If you're applying for Senior Demonstration Program, I recommend that you check the Notice to determine the match requirement before you submit your application.

15:15:48 This graphic shows what the budgeted 10% Grantee Share would look like for a grant with the total program budget of $100,000. In this example, the Grantee Share of $10,000 meets that 10% requirement.

15:16:05 It's important to remember that if a cost is unallowable as part of the AmeriCorps share, it is also unallowable as part of the Grantee Share or your required match.

15:16:13 Additionally, cash and in-kind contributions are acceptable as match when they are necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives.

15:16:23 When they are allowable under the Uniform Guidance, the NOFO and the application instructions.

15:16:23 When they are included in the approved budget and allocable under program guidelines.

15:16:35 When they are compliant with the terms and conditions of the award in Uniform Guidance, and when they are verifiable from the organization's records.

15:16:47 The matching resources must be treated the same as the AmeriCorps share and consistent treatment includes complete and accurate documentation.

15:16:58 A frequently heard phrase in the world of grants management is, if it isn't documented, it didn't happen.

15:16:58 Please make sure to document all of your expenses.

15:17:24 In order to fully demonstrate a plan for non-AmeriCorps support, applicants are required to include the Source of matching Funds in their budget narrative, entering a description of the source, along with the amount.

15:17:24 A cash or in-kind classification, the type of match source, that is state or local government, federal funds, or for private donations.

15:17:35 And confirmation of whether the sources of match are secured or proposed. You do not need to secure 100% of your match prior to submitting the application.

15:17:46 You may enter anticipated match by noting that it is proposed. Whether secured or proposed, the total in this section must equal the amount of match shown in the budget, exactly.

15:17:55 Let's turn our attention to the non-stipended programs, RSVP program.

15:18:10 The total cost increases over the first three years of program operation to a maximum of 30% of total grant costs.

15:18:28 For instance, if you have that $100,000 project budget in year 1, the Grantee Share must be $10,000, in year 2, the minimum Grantee Share is $20,000, and in year 3 and thereafter, the Grantee Share for that same $100,000 budget would be at least $30,000.

15:19:01 As with the nonstipended programs, cash and in-kind contributions are only acceptable or acceptable as match when they are necessary and reasonable to accomplish your program objectives, when they are included in the approved budget and allowable under program guidelines.

15:19:02 The NOFO and the application instructions. When they are compliant with the terms and conditions of the award and when they are verifiable from the organization's documentation.

15:19:13 Like this type and program budget, non-stipended and program applicants must also show the source of these matching resources in the Source of Funds section of the budget.

15:19:22 Also, please note that eGrants rounds the budgeted match amount up to the nearest percentage.

15:19:41 For example, a budget with 29.7% match will appear to match at 30%. For that reason, I always recommend that applicants calculate the percentage of match outside of eGrants to ensure that you are meeting or exceeding the required percentage.

15:20:01 Be aware that some Senior Demonstration Program applications may be required to provide these increasing match levels. Again remember to check the NOFO and that will include the specific match requirements for the Senior Demonstration Program you are applying to receive.

15:20:14 As you enter data in your budget, you will notice that the structure includes both the AmeriCorps and the Grantee Share of project costs.

15:20:21 And the AmeriCorps share is identified in eGrants as the CNCS Share. Additionally, the budget is divided in two different sections.

15:20:36 Section 1 is for Volunteer Support Expenses, which include both direct and indirect cost categories. The direct costs in this section include grant-related program operating costs.

15:21:07 Specific line items may include those shown on the slide. This section may also include general or centralized organizational expenses, spread across the entire organization, as indirect costs.

15:21:07 Section 2 of the budget is for volunteer expenses. As the section heading states, this includes all reimbursable expenses incurred for volunteers during the course of grant related activities, rather than the program operations.

15:21:28 The stipend and program budget includes a specific category for stipends and both the stipended and non-stipended and budgets included a category for Other Volunteer Costs, including those shown on the slide.

15:21:37 As you, the AmeriCorps Seniors applicant, develop your budget management systems and specifically the budget control process, you'll want to establish clear policies and procedures for tracking and documenting these expenses.

15:21:58 I will now review the specific AmeriCorps Seniors budget categories. As you enter your budget details in each of these categories, be sure to follow any specific requirements outlined in the related AmeriCorps Seniors NOFO and application instructions.

15:22:03 I'll begin this review with section 1, the Volunteer Support Expenses.

15:22:34 In category 1.A., we have our project personnel expenses. Here you will individually list each staff position supported by the grant and provide the annual salary and level of effort as a percentage of the full-time equivalent, or FTE.

15:22:51 Devoted to this award or if calculated on an hourly basis, you will include the hourly rate and the number of hours per week. Please remember to only include positions supported by the application narrative.

15:22:51 And make sure not to include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers, unless it is for organizational functions such as accounting, auditing, or training.

15:23:16 In addition, if you have multiple AmeriCorps grants, it's a good idea to confirm that you are not over budgeting, that is, including more than 100% of staff time on your budgets.

15:23:22 You can do this by including a statement in each line or by adding a zero-dollar line item that states, the percentage of time allocated to budgeted staff does not exceed 100% across all AmeriCorps grants, or something to that effect.

15:23:44 The next category is Personnel Fringe Benefits. Here you identify the type of fringe benefit and the cost for each staff. The budget includes pre-existing FICA, Health and Life Insurance, and retirement line items that you can edit.

15:23:52 You will add additional lines such as state unemployment insurance and Worker's Compensation, as appropriate.

15:24:05 Please make sure that your fringe benefit costs should align with salary lines. It should only include staff included in the personnel expenses category and that should be calculated in alignment with the Category I.A. calculations.

15:24:13 If the benefit amount is more than 30% of the salary costs, you must justify the cost by listing the benefits separately.

15:24:29 In other words, rather than enter fringe benefits at 41.65% of total salaries, you will break it out with something like, health insurance at 24%, retirement at 10%, and FICA at 7.65%.

15:24:54 The travel category is divided into local travel that is travel within the project service area, as shown in item 12 of the 424 face sheet.

15:24:54 And long distance travel, that travel which occurs outside the service area.

15:25:14 In both categories, you should include the purpose of the travel and the type of travel costs. Whether it's ground transportation or other costs.

15:25:14 And you will also include the number of trips and number of staff traveling.

15:25:14 Please make sure this calculation is clear and simple to follow.

15:25:21 You should only include travel costs for staff that is listed in budget Category I.A. and directly support the grant activities described in your application.

15:25:35 Be aware that you may budget mileage at a rate higher than the federal reimbursement rate, if that follows your organization's policy and is justified in the budget narrative.

15:25:44 I will address categories D and E, that is equipment and supplies together.

15:26:04 AmeriCorps defines equipment as tangible, nonexpendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5000 or more per unit.

15:26:16 Regardless of how your organization defines equipment, it's a proposed if the proposed expense does not meet this criteria -- you must show the equipment cost and number of units with purpose of equipment.

15:26:24 Likewise, you must show the type of supplies in Category E and their respective costs and individually list any single item up to $1000 or more.

15:26:48 In category F, our Contractual/Consultant Services section, that will include all contractual and consultant services.

15:26:53 Itemize each contract or consultant and provide a brief justification of the need. You can convey that the costs are reasonable and necessary by including a daily or hourly rate or annual contract fee and the justification.

15:27:02 This category should include any service documented by a contract, such as equipment maintenance, accounting services, and training consultants.

15:27:21 The other volunteer support , section is kind of a catch all category for those project expenses that don't fit into the other categories.

15:27:29 In this category, you must include National Service criminal history checks for employees or other individuals who receive a salary or similar payment from the grant.

15:27:54 This is a pre-existing line item that you will edit as appropriate. If you do not include costs for these checks, please make sure to explain how the costs are covered or that the checks are already completed for the applicable individual.

15:28:05 This category may also include line items to cover the cost for training, evaluation services, recruitment expenses, and other expenses that don't fit into categories A-F.

15:28:26 In addition to these direct costs, Section 1 includes a category for Indirect Costs. Those are general or centralized costs that support the project, they do not include specific project costs.

15:28:26 That may be included in an organization's indirect cost rate agreement, if one exists, or that can be calculated using a di Minimis rate.

15:28:27 Let's take a few minutes to look at those calculations.

15:28:34 There are two methods for calculating the Indirect Costs.

15:28:41 If an applicant has a federally approved indirect cost rate, they must use this method.

15:28:47 And the approved rate agreement constitutes documentation of the Indirect Costs.

15:29:02 eGrants will direct you to specify the rate type, whether provisional or predetermined, fixed or final and to supply the rates and basis on which the rate is calculated.

15:29:11 That may be salaries and benefits, or it could be all direct costs, including volunteer expenses or some other basis.

15:29:25 If you are budgeting for less than the maximum allowed, you should note the percentage claimed in the description.

15:29:39 Applicants must also enter the details of their approved negotiated indirect cost for agreement in eGrants, using the guidance and application instructions.

15:29:40 Please make sure that the budgeted rate matches the rate details that you entered in eGrants.

15:29:59 Alternatively, applicants that do not have a federally approved indirect cost rate may use a di Minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs.

15:29:59 It is important to note that if that the di Minims option is elected, the organization must use it consistently across all the organization's federal awards.

15:30:12 As an alternative to using either of these methods, applicants may charge these costs as direct costs, providing that they meet the allowability standards outlined in the Uniform Guidance.

15:30:28 Let's move to section 2, which focuses on the volunteer expenses.

15:30:44 As I previously mentioned, stipended program budgets include two budget categories, while the non-stipended program budgets include just a single category for Other Volunteer Costs.

15:30:44 We will start a review with the stipendeds program Category 2.A., that only includes lines for the volunteer stipends.

15:30:52 eGrants pre-populates the annual stipend calculation based on the current rate, which is specified in the NOFO.

15:31:04 And then applicants only need to enter the number of volunteers and the stipend totals for both the AmeriCorps and the Grantee Share, and the total amount of the line items.

15:31:34 This budget section for all AmeriCorps Seniors programs includes a category for Other Volunteer Costs, which appears as category 2.B. for stipended programs and 2. A. non-stipended program budgets.

15:31:34 In all cases, this category is pre-populated with lines for meals, uniforms, insurance, recognition, travel, and for stipended program budgets, physical examinations.

15:31:51 And you will enter the associated costs to justify the expense in the same way that you did in Section 1, including details such as the number of individuals covered, the cost per item, and a mileage rate.

15:31:56 Please remember that insurance for volunteers on assignment is a required line item, the details of which are outlined in the regulations.

15:32:09 While performing assignments, such as their transportation and supplies.

15:32:14 As long as the costs are outlined in the memorandum of outstanding negotiated with the volunteer station where the volunteer is serving.

15:32:39 The last section of the budget narrative is the Source of Funds section. In it, you won't list budget sections or line item cost, rather you will enter the source of these resources that are covering the specific line item expenses in the Grantee Share of the budget.

15:32:47 As I said, the Source of Funds section provides details for any Grantee Share for cash or in-kind resources included in the budget.

15:32:57 Applicants will enter these details from the budget section 1 and 2 headings and click the link to enter the Source of matching Funds, as shown here.

15:33:24 Once you click that link, a new screen will open for you to enter the source. Please be aware that there is a source of funds category for Section 1 and for section 2. You will use either or both, depending on where you budgeted resources as part of the Grantee Share.

15:33:33 Once you open the window for the Source of matching Funds, you'll enter each source of matching resources separately, including a brief description of the match.

15:33:38 Whether it is secured or proposed, the dollar amount of the resources, the match classification, whether cash or in-kind resources, and the source type such as private or state and local government.

15:33:52 I caution you to update this section as well as the indirect costs section, after making any budget revisions, so these two sections reflect all changes.

15:34:15 As I mentioned before, the source of funds must total the total amount of resources in the Grantee Share of the budget.

15:34:24 Exactly. When complete, the Source of Funds section might include content similar to this example. Note that this only includes the source of the match, not the specific budget sections or line items covered by those matching resources.

15:34:53 And it provides the required details, noting whether the resources are secured or proposed, whether they or in-kind donations or cash, and whether they are provided by private or government entity.

15:34:53 As long as we're discussing matching resources, I want to repeat what I stated earlier. If a cost is unallowable as part of the AmeriCorps share, it is also unallowable as part of the Grantee Share or your required match.

15:34:53 Again, if you're not sure if the cause is allowable or not, Uniform Guidance is the best place to find the answer.

15:35:17 This is also a good time to discuss the Excess Funds column that applicants may use to report the amount of Grantee Share resources in excess of the required match.

15:35:27 Applicants are not required to utilize the excess column, but they may do so if they choose. This column may include the cost of activities such as fundraising, which are unallowable on the actual grant budget.

15:35:36 The source of the excess funds should not be included in the Source of Funds section. Nor should the excess funds be included in the base in which you --.

15:35:53 Before we close, I want to offer a few pointers to check and double check your work to eliminate erroneous information.

15:35:53 The notice and application instructions outline any budget restrictions and regulations, including the minimum match requirements.

15:36:11 Please make sure to follow them. Your budget should include all required costs, such as cost for staff and volunteer National Service Criminal History Checks and transportation, recognition, and insurance costs for volunteers.

15:36:28 Your budget narrative will demonstrate how you are supporting all budgeted match with the Source of Funds section that includes all the required details and equals the total budgeted match exactly.

15:36:28 Even if your budgeted match exceeds the minimum requirement, you must still include the entire match amount in your Source of Funds section.

15:36:49 As much as possible, due to eGrants character limits, the budget narrative should provide details including the purpose and accurate calculation in whole dollars, and exclude unallowable costs.

15:37:08 Both those unallowed in the NOFO or application instruction and those unallowed by the regulations. I often recommend that applicants use those zero-dollar line items to enter additional clarifications, if needed.

15:37:08 Please have someone check all of your calculations before you submit.

15:37:22 Finally, and most importantly, you should ensure that you will align your budget narrative to the program goals in the application narrative. Including miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts may adversely impact your application status.

15:37:34 Again, I stress the benefit of an involving your whole team and someone outside of the team in the budget development process.

15:37:34 Having another set of eyes provide a review of the final budget can make an incredible difference.

15:37:51 In addition, before submitting your application, please make sure your organization has an active registration with the System for Award Management.

15:37:53 If you are applying for the first time, I recommend that you apply early, as it may take a while to activate the registration.

15:38:14 Please be aware that SAM is a free service.

15:38:14 Organizations should never pay for SAM registration.

15:38:22 Further, know that applicants must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the application process and if awarded an AmeriCorps Seniors grant, must maintain the active registration throughout the life of the grant.

15:38:43 If you have a SAM registration and it will soon expire, you may want to renew it so you don't have to address that through the clarification or resolution process.

15:38:43 When required by the NOFO, please make sure to submit your organization's Operational and Financial Management Survey, as directed.

15:38:58 And please make sure that your organization's most recent single audit is still on file with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and your Form 990 is submitted to GuideStar, as applicable.

15:39:04 And finally, if you have one, please make sure to enter your current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate details in eGrants, using the guidance in the application instructions.

15:39:24 AmeriCorps is aware that on occasion, applications experience challenges with our eGrants system. EGrants automatically performs a limited compliance check to validate the budget and this may result in a warning or error message.

15:39:50 Some of these messages prevent you from submitting your application, so you should be aware of the differences and related actions. For instance, when you receive a warning, you can move forward, but the application or budget may not be compliant with the guidelines.

15:39:50 On the other hand, an error message will not allow you to move forward until you correct that error.

15:40:03 You must resolve all errors before you can submit the application. If you experience a challenge other than a warning or error message, you should contact the AmeriCorps Hotline right away.

15:40:09 The number is 800-942-2677 and a link to the help request form is at the bottom of most eGrant pages.

15:40:40 I want to draw your attention back to these bullets that I shared earlier. I encourage you to keep this checklist nearby as you develop your budget and frequently consult it as a budget development guide and quality assurance checklist.

15:40:40 Many budgets require extensive revisions, in part because applicants do not follow the points outlined here.

15:40:45 You will save yourself a great deal of follow-up effort by checking your proposed budget against this checklist before submitting it to AmeriCorps.

15:41:05 I hope you found this instruction a helpful guide for developing your AmeriCorps Seniors budget and budget narrative. I encourage you to review the content from this presentation several times before submitting your application, as part of your quality assurance process.

15:41:09 And I wish you all the best as you develop your proposal and related budget content.

15:41:14 >> Recording stopped.

15:41:34 >> We are going to pause briefly here as we stopped recording and we will restart in just a few seconds for our question and answer series. I'm going to pass the microphone over to my colleague, Debbie Truchan.

15:41:47 >> Recording of progress

15:42:11 >> Please make sure to put your questions in the Q&A box. For the Senior Demonstration Program. A two-year budget. When we say put in an annual salary, how do we do that for this particular application for two years?

15:42:26 >> Great question. I think there are a couple of ways you might want to look at this. We don't give us any specific directive as to what format it should take.

15:42:49 As I mentioned when I was going to that section, in the project personnel expenses you will list staff position, you will list their salary position. In this case you could say, project manager, year one at $50,000, 100%.

15:43:10 Or you could say project manager, two-year, $100,000, 100%. That would be taking in $50,000 each year.

15:43:22 To me, if I am reviewing that it's a little less clear what the plan is. In that case, you may want to give even more information like project manager two years at $50,000 each year.

15:43:30 Or if you want to allow for salary increases, it might be 48-52, or something like that.

15:43:46 To me personally, the easiest way to see that is year one, X number of dollars and then go through all of the personnel expenses in that way.

15:44:01 >> Great, thank you. The next question is, there are two points but excess funds. One, excess funds should not be included -- and what was the second point? Can you read that again?

15:44:24 >> Absolutely. Before I do that, I want to ask you to think about excess funds as something that you all are seeing and you are knowing that there's activities related to those funds.

15:44:31 So you want to see it on the budget but when it comes to AmeriCorps staff looking at that, we're really just looking at what you are including in the AmeriCorps share and the Grantee Share.

15:44:42 That is your actual budget for allowable activities and allowable costs.

15:45:06 . Because it's not part of your regular budget or actual budget, it's not included in the Indirect Costs and it's not part of the source of funds. If your AmeriCorps shares $50,000, your Grantee Share is $10,000, and your access is $20,000.

15:45:11 Your source of funds is only going to be that $10,000, not $30,000.

15:45:32 >> Great. Thank you. --

15:45:49 >> Your grant writing is your fundraising, again, if you want to show up that's where you have staff doing those types of activities, that's great.

15:45:54 But you should also know that when our staff is actually reviewing your budget, we are not reviewing the content of the access.

15:46:01 It truly is excess information.

15:46:15 >> Thank you. I do want to make the announcement for any budget related questions, while we have Tracy, we want to make sure we get the most out of her, so please put in your questions for budget related things.

15:46:54 We did do an update to the FAQ on the 22nd of September.

15:47:05 We received the question about recurrent grantees, can they count unduplicated volunteers on the ARP grants, if awarded.

15:47:20 Any grant you should only be counting unduplicated volunteers once, but that does not mean volunteers cannot serve on other projects or programs.

15:47:30 But you can't count them as volunteers. You should only be counting your unduplicated volunteers once. That's why we made sure to add that to the FAQs, because we did receive that question.

15:47:51 Can supplies be -- for volunteer projects or just referred to as office supplies?

15:48:19 >> Supplies are any of the supplies that you would need. Again, we also have that other volunteer, that's where you've got your meals, your uniforms, that could also include cost of actually implementing your activities.

15:48:28 You could put it in there, as well. The supply section is more for the program management.

15:48:47 It doesn't have to necessarily be office supplies, but if I'm looking to the actual question, that could probably go in to the other volunteer category in section 2.

15:48:55 >> I will answer this.

15:49:19 . This is the first session – if all webinars and the Q&A will be posted in the ARP resource page. I am putting that in the Chat now. Hopefully you have access to for some other previous recordings as well.

15:49:33 And it will go up by at least Friday. What is excess expense covered by excess funds are intermingling -- by federal expenses, how is this handled?

15:49:53 >> I would love you to add to that question, if you would. I am not clear what you are asking or what you are referencing when you're talking about intermingling those.

15:50:15 I guess I want to make things - I want to make it a little clearer and the access piece. The nice part of the access is it allows you to see what's in your budget or not in your budget, what is going into your program.

15:50:34 You can include those things that you might not be allowed to include in the budget, like the fundraising or lobbying.

15:50:34 You can still see, for your benefit that you are doing it.

15:50:34 It's also an opportunity to see those extra funds you are contributing beyond the required 10%, 20%, 30%, whatever is required.

15:50:44 And you can see that you have it there but you are not necessarily held accountable, or that extra amount.

15:51:05 I guess I want to make sure, are we talking about intermingling - if this person's salary is $100,000 and putting 70% of it on the budget and 30% over here in the access column?

15:51:14 Or are you thinking this person's salary is $100,000 and 70% of their time there working on program activities, 30% are doing fundraising and lobbying.

15:51:29 I want to make sure you are real clear as to how you are using that. I don't know if that answers the question, it makes it more confusing. Thank you for providing the extra information.

15:51:51 Hopefully that answered that piece about them being connected. If you put the unallowable piece in the access and you just put in your -- 10%, so 90% on program activities.

15:52:02 >> I'm going to go to the last question. Can funds be used towards non-federal match?

15:52:14 >> Our guidance allows state, local, federal, private sources of match.

15:52:31 Those are your options for describing your match. Are they allowed part would be up to your state, whether or not they would allow you to use them as match.

15:52:31 As far as AmeriCorps is concerned, that is definitely an allowable source of match.

15:52:57 What would the target is five --

15:53:09 >> When they are applying for this grant, let's say they get unduplicated volunteers.

15:53:17 Let's say you apply for $100,000, that would mean you would have 100 unduplicated volunteers.

15:53:26 If that would translate to VSY over the two years, how would they plug that into the stipend and line item of the budget?

15:53:35 Should they just do the full two years of the stipend. They won't be able to know what was for the first year and what was for the second year.

15:53:57 >> You are saying you cannot enter two lines here? To do a single year at a time.

15:54:12 >> I believe the VSY stipend and line item only has one or are you able to do a separate?

15:54:26 >> I would have to get in there and look. Let's get back to that and find out what eGrant's capability is. I don't know. I have never tried to enter stipends for more than one year.

15:54:39 >> I do think they want to follow the same thought process on how we do performance measures and budget.

15:54:49 You wouldn't necessarily need to divide out your VSY stipend, you would just plug in what you are expecting to spend for the full two years.

15:55:00 Sorry if this got a little confusing. I think you would need to plug-in the two years for what you plan to spend.

15:55:07 >> So they could put 40 in there and call it done, over the course of two years.

15:55:16 >> And in each progress report, you will be able to evaluate how they are doing in that area, over the two years.

15:55:26 >> Thanks, for adding to that. Like I said, I hadn't looked in there so I was not sure.

15:55:39 >> I feel like this may be related to the -- budget.

15:55:48 A new protocol and direction for three-year grant carries forward for a year by year budget has not been mentioned, or did I miss it?

15:55:53 How might that relate to this project?

15:56:12 >> Susan, you did not miss it because it doesn't necessarily relate to this. Because the projects will have a 24 month project budget..

15:56:22 Grantees will receive two years of funding upfront. We won't need to submit continuation applications about what is unspent and what we are caring forward.

15:56:25 It will be the whole two-year amount upfront and you will have the whole two-year budget.

15:56:35 >> I'm going to make a four minute call for any additional questions.

15:56:56 This goes back to talking about unduplicated volunteers and how that goes. What if we have two AmeriCorps Seniors projects in one area, one RSVP.

15:57:08 If you are adding an ARP program are we supposed to crosscheck our volunteers to make sure --.

15:57:11 This is a great question I will take it back to the team. We will update the FAQ.

15:57:23 How do we manage multiple programs in the tracking system. Please be on the lookout in the FAQ.

15:57:31 If it is not up Friday, it will be up by Monday, for sure..

15:57:54 This is going back to the unduplicated volunteers. I'm not quite sure I can revisit the training but the guidance does stand that unduplicated volunteers we should not be counting unduplicated volunteers for cross program.

15:58:29 Thank you for the feedback on that. Any additional questions. We have two minutes. Any last minute questions about how to do a budget while we have Tracey?

15:58:44 This will be posted on the ARP resource page. Both the original training webinar as well as the Q&A that we are going through now.

15:58:54 Thank you Carol, I'm glad you came.

15:59:09 I'd also like to say thank you to the LSI team for helping us through the session and clicking. We appreciate you guys.

15:59:18 There were a range of between 23 and 25 individuals on our call today.

15:59:49 We have a question in the chat box. Can we use supplies for -- in the budget?

15:59:55 >> I think that seems to go back to the earlier question that we had about supplies and are they office supplies or could they be supplies used for engaging the volunteers in their service.

16:00:12 I think that falls into that, as I am interpreting that. It falls into the same category. It would be the supplies you need to actually complete the service, and that would be allowable.

16:00:25 >> Okay, we are going to close. Thank you so much. Thank you Tracey, you're amazing.

16:00:37 >> Always great to join you all. Thank you for being on the call, I appreciate it.

16:00:47 >> [End of webinar]