2021 RSVP Competition Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: August 28, 2020

Overview

This document supplements the Senior Corps FY 2021 RSVP Competition Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions. These FAQs will be updated periodically. New or updated questions will be clearly indicated within each section.

Contents

1. Award Information

1.1 Is a separate application needed for each opportunity number listed in Appendix A?

Yes. Applicants may apply to as many opportunities as they wish, provided that they are able to demonstrate sufficient local knowledge, presence, and administrative capacity to successfully sponsor each opportunity. Applicants would need to submit a separate application for each opportunity.

1.2 Can an organization that wins this competition sub contract to another organization to run RSVP?

No.

1.3 What are the responsibilities of a sponsor with respect to project management responsibilities? For example, can an RSVP grantee contract out any of these key management responsibilities?

No. Please see the RSVP program regulation requirement 45CFR§2553.22:

What are the responsibilities of a sponsor?
A sponsor is responsible for fulfilling all project management requirements necessary to accomplish the purposes of the RSVP program as specified in the Act. A sponsor shall not delegate or contract these responsibilities to another entity. A sponsor shall comply with all regulations contained in this part, policies, and grant provisions prescribed by the Corporation.

1.4 What is the project period for the FY 2021 RSVP Competition?

The project period start dates for an opportunity are listed in Appendix A. One 12 month project period starts April 1, 2021. The other 12 month project period starts July 1, 2021. See Appendix A for the specific starting date for the opportunity number you are applying to.

2. Eligible Organizations

2.1 We previously relinquished an RSVP grant. May we apply for a new grant in this competition?

Yes. The organization must continue to meet the eligibility criteria listed in section C of the *Notice*.

2.2 Can two organizations jointly apply for one grant?

No. One organization must be identified as the sponsor organization. The second organization could become a volunteer station, but would not be considered the grantee.

2.3 We are in the process of becoming a new non-profit and do not yet have an EIN, IRS non-profit status document, or a 990. Can we still apply?

No. The applicant organization must be an established non-profit at the time the application is submitted. If the organization is already a non-profit, but not a 501(c)3, non-profit designation issued by the Secretary of State (or similar organization in your state) would be sufficient documentation for documentation requirement #14 in the Grant Application Instructions.

2.4 If the geographic area I wish to serve is not listed in Appendix A, can I apply for that service area?

No.

2.5 We intend to separate from our fiscal agent and file for an independent federal tax exempt status later this calendar year, but after the grant application is due. Should we apply under the DUNS Number and EIN of our fiscal agent, or just apply under our own EIN and DUNS which other than through our fiscal agent agreement is not yet a 501(c)(3)?

An EIN, non-profit status verification, and 990 are required for non-profit applicants in order to be eligible to apply for this competition. Therefore, the new organization being formed would not be eligible because they are not yet a non-profit. Once a grant is awarded in the RSVP Competition, it must stay with the legal applicant and cannot be redirected through a transfer.

2.6 My organization would like to apply for an opportunity listed in Appendix A, but we are located outside of the geographic service area. Can we still apply?

Yes. However, if awarded, the project must serve the geographic service area exactly as it is described in Appendix A. Additional counties or cities that are not listed in Appendix A cannot be added.

2.7 Does a legal applicant need to have an address in the county?

As specified in section C.3 of the *Notice*, the legal applicant must have sufficient local presence to directly manage the proposed RSVP grant. The operation of an RSVP grant cannot be delegated to another organization, even if the other organization is an affiliate of the legal applicant.

2.8 Are labor organizations eligible to apply?

No.

3. Selection Criteria and Review

3.1 How should applicants address the selection criteria described in the Notice for cost effectiveness/budget adequacy?

Selection criteria Q15-Q16 should be addressed through the limited text that can be entered in the eGrants budget section and should align with the other narrative responses.

3.2 How is the DUNS number used during the review?

The DUNS number is one of the items considered during the financial review. A DUNS number establishes an organization's credit score and so should be established as soon as possible prior to submitting an application.

3.3 Selection Criteria Q13 asks about staff positions. Is a full time RSVP Director required for this competition or can there be a part time RSVP Director?

According to RSVP Federal Regulation 45 CFR Part 2553.23 (c): A sponsor may negotiate the employment of a part-time project director with the Corporation when it can be demonstrated that such an arrangement will not adversely affect the size, scope and quality of project operations.

As stated in the Notice, the applicant should clearly define in the organizational capability narrative the paid staff positions and how these positions will ensure the accomplishment of program objectives.

3.4 The Grant Application Instructions say to include the narrative components listed for STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES in the Work Plan – so what do we write in this narrative section? Or in the Strengthening Communities narrative only included only in the Work Plans?

As stated in the Grant Applications Instructions, "Your Work Plans should align with the Strengthening Communities Narrative section of your grant application. Work Plans translate the narrative information that you provided into organized task plans that include the inputs (unduplicated volunteers), service activities, outputs, and outcomes. The Work Plans also provide a place for you to set targets for outputs and outcomes.

Reviewers will be assessing the work plans and the strengthening communities narrative to ensure that they are aligned. To see examples of previous Senior Corps Review Forms on how reviewers have reviewed the strengthening communities narrative in the past, please refer to the Results of Grant Competitions: https://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition.

The character limit is 2000 characters for the community need statement, instrument description, and the service activity description in the work plans. There will be limited data that you will be able to put in those texts fields. The strengthening communities narrative will give you the opportunity to answer the selection criteria (Q1 – Q5).

4. eGrants

4.1 When starting my application in eGrants, do I select 'new' or 'renewal'?

ALL APPLICANTS should select 'new.' This includes incumbent RSVPs (organizations that currently have an RSVP Grant Award).

If you selected 'new' the application type on the left side of the screen will say 'new.' Your application will not include any information from previous grant applications.

If you selected 'renewal' the application type on the left side of the screen will say 'new grant/previous grantee.' Information from previously awarded grants will already be populated in the application.

If you selected 'renewal,' please delete the application and begin again with a 'new' application.

4.2 How do I enter my authorized representative name in my application?

The authorized representative for your organization must login to eGrants with their own user account, click on the assurances and conditions, and submit the grant application. This will allow their name to show up as the authorized representative for the grant application.

4.3 I cannot complete the validate function for the performance measures. When I go to validate, it says that you have to have a performance measure for all objectives. What am I doing wrong?

It is likely that you have checked an objective on the first Performance Measure screen and have not entered a work plan for that objective. Contact the National Service Hotline if further assistance is needed.

4.4 What should be entered in the "Other" narrative section?

Please enter 'N/A.'

4.5 We are a new applicant organization and would be hiring someone new for the project director position if the grant was awarded. Who should we enter as the project director in eGrants if that person is not yet hired?

You may enter another person who is currently at your organization, such as the person who would be the project director's supervisor. The project director name can be updated later in eGrants if the grant is awarded.

4.6 Our organization headquarters is located separately from where the RSVP project office would be located. Which address should be listed as the project location address in eGrants?

When creating the organization, enter the organization headquarters address (see page 8 of the Grant Application Instructions). When entering the project location (see page 13 of the Grant Application Instructions), enter the project location address.

4.7 Are footnotes or endnotes allowed in the application narrative?

No. eGrants does not support the use of footnotes or endnotes.

4.8 Is there a specific font or font size that should be used for the narrative?

eGrants will format all font entered to a specific size. Font size cannot be altered in eGrants.

4.9 We deleted some of our performance measures in eGrants. Now when trying to validate the work plans, we receive the following: "Error: At least one performance measure must be created for all selected Objectives." Please advise how we can proceed.

This error message means that some of the objectives are checked on the objectives tab but do not have a corresponding performance measure created. Go to the objectives tab and uncheck the objectives that you will not be using. If you continue to encounter this error, contact the National Service Hotline for eGrants technical assistance: (800) 942-2677.

4.10 In order to estimate the length of my narratives, I am trying to set up my Microsoft Word document to correspond exactly with the spacing and font size that eGrants uses for the printable version of an application. What spacing and font does the eGrants system use?

The eGrants system uses Georgia font, 11 point. The line spacing is 1.8, multiple. The header is 0.81" from the top, the footer is 0.24" from the bottom, the left indentation is 0.08", and the right indentation is 0.12".

4.11 When I view the printable version of my application in eGrants, part of the service activity description is cut off by a page break and is not included on the following page. Will reviewers be able to see the full description?

Yes. We will ensure that during the review there is a process for reviewers to view the entire description.

4.12 I have been emailing my required documents to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov, but the documents section of my application in eGrants still shows 'not sent' next to each document. Why is this?

You must manually update the document section of eGrants to indicate whether you have sent each document. It does not update automatically based on documents emailed.

4.13 Our authorized representative will be changing soon. Who should be listed as the authorized representative in eGrants?

The authorized representative should be the person authorized to make financial decisions on behalf of your organization. The authorized representative and project director will be contacted during the clarification part of the review and will be notified about competition results. In order to ensure that CNCS is able to contact the appropriate person at your organization, please ensure that the authorized representative who originally submitted the grant application can forward any emails from CNCS to the correct new authorized representative or that an "out of office" message is displayed so the new authorized representative can be contacted by CNCS.

4.14 When I view the pdf of my application narratives, I see upside down question marks instead of the apostrophes and other special characters that I entered. How can I fix this?

eGrants does not support the use of special characters. There is not a solution for this issue other than to type your narratives without special characters. Reviewers will be aware of this issue.

4.15 In eGrants there is a space to enter a State Application Identifier. Can the application be submitted with the State Application Identifier blank?

Yes, eGrants will allow you to submit the application with the State Application Identifier field blank.

4.16 Are tables allowed in the narratives section? If so, can the text within the tables be single- spaced?

Tables are not permitted in the narrative section. eGrants only supports text.

5. Budget

5.1 There are two sections to enter the Source of Matching Funds, one in Budget Section I and another in Budget Section II. Do I have to complete both?

It depends on which sections contain your non-federal funds. If you include non-federal funds (grantee share) in the budget for both Budget Section I and Budget Section II, then you would complete the Source of Matching Funds in both Budget Section I and Budget Section II. If you only have non-federal funds in one of the budget sections, then you would only complete the Source of Matching Funds for the particular section where you budget your grantee share.

5.2 In the indirect cost budget section, if we enter our indirect costs in the grantee share column rather than the CNCS share column, do we still have to submit our indirect cost rate agreement?

Yes. Your indirect cost rate agreement must be submitted regardless of whether the indirect costs are in the CNCS share or the grantee share.

5.3 How do I know what volunteer insurance to include in the budget?

For information about required volunteer insurance and other reimbursable expenses, please review the cost reimbursement section of the Federal Regulations, § 2553.43. A link to the Federal Regulations is found on page 4 of the *Notice*. Volunteer insurance could be obtained through an organization such as CIMA: http://www.cimaworld.com/nonprofits/protecting- volunteers/ or another volunteer insurance provider.

5.4   Is there a formula for determining the non-federal share we should budget?

Yes. The RSVP non-federal share requirement — 10% in Year 1, 20% in Year 2, and 30% in Year 3 and subsequent years — is calculated as a percentage of the total project budget. For example, if your total budget is $100,000, the required non-federal share for Year One would be $10,000 and the federal share would be $90,000. The amount listed in the Grant Opportunity Summaries is the federal share. Please refer to 45 CFR 2553.72 for specific language from the regulation.

5.5   Will cash or in-kind contributions be accepted as part of the required non-federal share?

Yes. The RSVP Program Regulations in 45 CFR 2553.72(2), state that: "a grantee is responsible for identifying non-Corporation funds which may include in-kind contributions."

5.6   Should 5% of the RSVP project director's salary and benefits be included in the Excess column of the budget to account for time spent fund raising?

If the RSVP project director engages in fundraising activities, time spent on these activities cannot be paid for through CNCS funds or through non-federal funds that are part of the required non-federal share. If time is spent on fundraising, the Excess column should reflect the amount of time that is spent on fundraising.

5.7   Please clarify how the "Excess Amount" category is to be used in calculating the budget.

The Excess column of the budget may be used to reflect the amount of non-federal cash and in- kind contributions generated by a sponsor in excess of the required percentage. An applicant is not required to utilize the excess column, but may do so if they choose. For instance, if project staff spend time on fundraising, the applicant may choose to reflect the amount of time spent on fundraising in the excess column as time spent on these activities cannot be paid for through CNCS funds or through non-federal funds that are part of the required non-federal share.

5.8   We do not yet have an approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but we hope to have one in the next few months. How should we handle this?

At the time the application is submitted, if an indirect cost rate agreement is not yet approved, the costs would have to be budgeted as direct costs. If the application is awarded and the indirect cost rate agreement is approved, an amendment could be done at a later time to adjust the budget for the new indirect cost rate agreement.

5.9   Can federal funds from other sources be used towards the non-federal match?

Federal funds, in most cases, are not allowed to be used as match on other federal awards. However, some federal agencies may specifically designate that their federal funding is allowed to be used as match on another federal award. The applicant is responsible for determining whether a federal agency may allow their funding to be used as match on an RSVP award All RSVP grants must operate in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audits Requirements for Federal Awards, which can be found on page 17 of the RSVP *Notice*.

5.10 What is the length of time for the fiscal year or budget year for RSVP?

RSVP has a 12 month fiscal year.

5.11 Should the source of Excess Funds be included in the budget section titled "Source of Funds"?

No. The Source of Funds section is for the grantee share or non-federal share of the budget.

5.12 Are dues paid for membership in the Senior Corps and other professional associations allowable as a grant cost? If so, how much do these dues typically cost?

Yes, under 2 CFR § 200.454, membership dues in professional associations are an allowable cost. Senior Corps grantees can include membership dues for Senior Corps and other professional associations in their grant budgets. They can be budgeted as CNCS share and required grantee share, and as excess. Travel related with these associations can also be budgeted.

For typical cost of these dues, contact the professional association that you intend to join.

5.13 Can the purchase of a computer and RSVP volunteer tracking software be included in the budget and paid for by CNCS funds?

Yes.

5.14 There are two budget reports in eGrants (budget and budget narrative), and each shows a different percentage for my total grantee share column. Which percentage do I check to ensure I am meeting the non-federal share requirement for my application?

The required non-federal share should be checked using the one page Budget report rather than the Budget Narrative report. The funding percentage at the bottom of the report under "grantee share" gives the non-federal share percentage.

5.15 Can RSVP funds by used to hire a data manager?

Yes, RSVP grant funds may be used to help a sponsor provide levels of staffing and resources appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the project and carry out its project management responsibilities.

5.16 If the proposed project focuses on supporting evidence-based programs, can funds be used to cover costs associated with establishing that program (program software, materials, books, training, licensing, and certifications)?

Yes.

5.17 Do you have a sample budget? I understand the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) allows you to request copies of funded grants.

Senior Corps does not have sample budgets. Please refer to the National Service Knowledge Network Online Learning Center specifically for Preparing the Grant Budget for Senior Corps Programs ECourse: https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management/preparing-grant-budget-senior-corps-programs-ecourse.

5.18 What is the typical salary range for the program director?

It varies by location, size, and complexity of the project.

5.19 Where can I find a definition of allowable in-kind funding?

As stated in the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200, third-party in-kind contributions means the value of non-cash contributions (i.e. property or services) that – (a) benefit a federally assisted project or program; and (b) are contributed by non-federal third parties, without charge, to a non-federal entity under a federal award.

5.20 I am current grantee looking to expand my service area. Is it allowable to use my time on both projects? Would I need to amend my current grant? How long does it take to merge grants and what is the process?

We cannot offer specific advice on an application design.

You can discuss award merger procedures with your assigned CNCS point of contact if and when the grant is awarded.

5.21 Where can I look to find acceptable methods for accepting cash contributions for my match?

You can visit the UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS published by OMB and found here: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9cfecd70313d45c31dc6d16cab6f9026&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5. Please refer to 2 CFR 200.34, 200.305, and 200.306 for specific language.

5.22 Can an organization use the expenses associated with supporting volunteers over 55 that are not working under RSVP as match for an RSVP grant?

No. Any non-CNCS funding that is used to meet an RSVP grant's match requirement must directly support the RSVP grant award. Funding, whether cash or in-kind, that supports a non-RSVP program in a sponsoring organization may not be used as match on an RSVP grant.

5.23 Where/how do I enter office space given as fair market value?

We cannot give specific instructions for how to enter your budget in your grant application. Please refer to the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 specifically 200.306, 200.311, 200.434, and 200.502 about the fair market value for office space.

6. Required Documents

6.1. When sending the attachments to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov, should I send each one separately or combine all the documents into one document?

When sending the required documents for your application, please ensure that each document is submitted as a separate attachment. If necessary, you can submit more than one email but all required documents for your application should be submitted as separate documents attached to the email. Please do not scan all documents into one PDF and send as one attachment.

Name each attachment to correspond with the "Description of Attachment" found on pages 41- 43 of the Grant Application Instructions.

6.2. Where can I find a form for the Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement?

Forms are not provided for the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as part of this competition. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement already in place, then you should have a Negotiated

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement from your cognizant federal agency. Indirect Cost Rate Agreements should be submitted directly into eGrants.

6.3. Where can I find a list of station types for the station roster?

The station roster is not a required document for this competition for **new applicants**. If your application is selected for funding, the station roster will be submitted at a later time determined by your Program Officer/ Portfolio Manager. Your application should be submitted in eGrants without the station roster section completed.

If you are an **existing grantee** applying for **the same opportunity as your existing grant**, you will need to submit your current station roster. If you are an **existing grantee** applying for a **different or additional opportunity that you do not currently serve**, you do not need to submit a station roster for those opportunities that you don't currently serve.

6.4. Is there a certain format that required documents need to be in when e-mailed?

Documents can be submitted in either Microsoft Word format, Microsoft Excel format, or via pdf.

6.5. Where can I learn more about submitting an audit to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse?

You can visit the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website: https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/. You can also learn more by reading the Uniform Guidance --UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS published by OMB and found here: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=555f779aae8f5efa02cb6532344c2795&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5.

6.6. I am a current Senior Corps grantee, should I be following the instructions for submitting additional documents?

Current grantees should follow the instructions as listed in the NOFO and the application instructions.

7. Volunteers and Volunteer Stations

7.1   What types of organizations can be volunteer stations?

A volunteer station can be a public agency, secular or faith-based non-profit organization, or proprietary health care organization that accepts the responsibility for assignment and supervision of RSVP volunteers. Each volunteer station must be licensed or otherwise certified, when required, by the appropriate state or local government. Private homes are not volunteer stations. Informal groups do not qualify as volunteer stations.

7.2   What constitutes a volunteer "serving intensively on short term assignments?" For example, are there a minimum number of short term assignments required to justify counting a volunteer experience? Is there a benchmark for the number of hours per day or total assignment hours that is considered reasonable?

There is no minimum number of hours or assignments. This will vary based on each particular volunteer assignment developed by the RSVP. If using an assignment to satisfy performance measure requirements, please be sure to reference the "key definitions" and guidance on "how to measure/collect data" in Appendix B.

7.3   Is more than one volunteer station required?

There is no required number of volunteer stations. However, most RSVPs have many more than one station.

7.4   My organization is interested in starting new service activities in independent living. The service activities would take place in the homes of clients. We have not done this type of activity in the past. Can our organization be the volunteer station?

Yes, if your organization decides to start a new activity, you may use RSVP as volunteers in the activity. However, your organization may first want to consider if the activity fits with your organization's mission and how you would provide RSVP volunteer oversight in accordance with the RSVP federal regulations regarding the responsibility of volunteer stations, which are outlined in 45 CFR §2553.62. https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&rgn=div5&view=text&node=45:4.1.9.11.35&idno=45#se45.4.2553_162.

This should also include obtaining letters of agreement for in home placements.

7.5   Can further comment be provided for volunteer station models where there is only a single volunteer station or just a small number of volunteer stations? Specifically, is it possible for an application that has a single volunteer station or just a small number of volunteer stations to receive an RSVP grant award?

Volunteer station models depend on such factors as the number of volunteers required for the opportunity, and whether the applicant satisfactorily addresses all selection criteria questions that pertain to volunteer station management and oversight. Therefore, it is possible that such an applicant would be granted an RSVP grant award. Applicant responses to selection criteria questions will be reviewed according to the process outlined in the Notice of Funding. Some of the selection criteria do address volunteer station management and oversight, but there is no specific selection criterion that addresses volunteer station numbers.

7.6   Can a volunteer station be included in more than one work plan if there is more than one service activity occurring at the station?

Yes. Each work plan is developed based on the service activities selected for an output or output/outcome pair, not based on one particular volunteer station. One volunteer station may have many service activities occurring there and so may appear in more than one work plan.

7.7   Does a station need to have a physical address in the county or just volunteer opportunities available in that county?

It is possible for a volunteer station to successfully serve an area in which it is not physically located. Irrespective of its physical location, a volunteer station must be able to fulfill certain responsibilities. For instance, a volunteer station must develop volunteer assignments that impact critical human and social needs of the community served, provide supervision to volunteers while on assignment, and provide certain training and recognition to volunteers. A volunteer station is also responsible for record keeping and other administrative functions related to grants administration. Please see 45 CFR 2553.12 and 45 CFR 2553.62 for program specific regulations that explain the responsibilities of a volunteer station.

7.8   Can my organization serve as both a sponsor and as a volunteer station?

Yes. A sponsor can also serve as a volunteer station. There is no limitation on number of volunteers that may be places in assignments that serve programs or special activities directly, provided that CNCS agrees these activities are in accord with program objectives and will not hinder overall project operations. See 45 CFR 2553.61.

7.9   Can current volunteers who meet the age requirements be counted as RSVP volunteers as long as they are

working on one of the proposed projects?

According to 45 CFR 2553.41, an individual is eligible to be a RSVP volunteer if they are 55 years of age or older, agree to serve without compensation, reside in or nearby the community served by RSVP, and agree to abide by all requirements as set forth in this part.

7.10 "Does 'unduplicated volunteers' mean that you have to have different volunteers every year?

No. We actually encourage retention of volunteers. You may count one individual as an unduplicated volunteer in each year, since work plans and reports are completed on annual basis.

Please keep in mind that you will be assessed on your plan and infrastructure to retain and recognize RSVP volunteers which is question 8 of the selection criteria.

7.11 In the RSVP NOFO under Program Description, it says "RSVP engages people age 55 and older in diverse range of volunteer activities." In the Scoring Criteria, Q7, it says "RSVP volunteers between the ages of 55-70." Which is correct?

An RSVP volunteer has to be age 55 and older. For selection criteria question #7, this is referring to how you plan to recruit volunteers that may fall under these specific demographics (RSVP volunteers that may have a disability, be a veteran, difference races and ethnicities, and baby boomers which is in the 55 to 70 years old range). You can still have volunteers over the age of 70. There is no maximum age for RSVP volunteers.

8. Appendix A

8.1 The geographic service areas as described in Appendix A vary. Some include one county, some include multiple counties, and some include both counties and cities. Are we required to have a volunteer station in each city or county listed?

RSVP programs should mobilize volunteers within the service areas described in Appendix A. Applicants may propose a project design that varies in size and reach within the established service area. While there is no requirement that projects maintain a volunteer station in each named location, applicants should propose a project design that demonstrates measurable outcomes that address community needs within the established service area.

8.2 How do I know the opportunity number for the geographic service area?

All opportunity numbers are listed in Appendix A, which is found on the *Notice* website.

8.3 If my application is selected for funding, can I later add other service areas to my project that are not currently served by another RSVP?

No. At this time there is not a process for approving additional service areas or expanding into new geographic areas that are not served by RSVP. Only those service areas listed in Appendix A are currently available.

8.4 Do we need to serve the whole region or are we ok with just serving select cities within the funding opportunity?

Yes, you would need to serve the entire geographic service as listed in Appendix A.

8.5 Will an opportunity be awarded to just one organization, or can it be split between multiple awards?

Each opportunity is awarded to only one organization. Opportunities are not split between multiple awardees.

8.6 Why don't I see my area in Appendix A?

This year's competition is the third in a three-year competition cycle, during which all of our existing RSVP awards will be competed. If you don't see your area in this year's Appendix A, it may have been up for competition during the previous cycles. At this time there is not a process for approving additional service areas.

8.7 Why is the number of unduplicated volunteers listed in Appendix A more than the $1,000 annual base funding per unduplicated volunteer threshold listed in the Notice of Funding?

The $1,000 in annual base federal funding per unduplicated volunteer calculation refers to the minimum number of unduplicated volunteers that a grantee must place into work plans resulting in National Performance Measure outcomes. The remaining unduplicated volunteers may be programmed into additional outcome-based work plans or into the "Other Community Priority" work plans. For example, if Appendix A lists $100,000 for the "Total Annual Funding Available" and 110 as the "Number of Unduplicated Volunteers", a minimum of 100 of those unduplicated volunteers would need to be placed in workplans resulting in National Performance Measure outcomes. The remaining 10 unduplicated volunteers could be placed in "Other Community Priority" or additional outcome-based work plans. For more information about outcome-based work plans and performance measures, please review Appendix B.

9. Performance Measures

Please review Appendix B to assist you in determining which Performance Measures to select for a specific service activity.

9.1 What is an unduplicated volunteer?

Each volunteer can be counted only once as an "unduplicated volunteer" across all of the proposed work plans even if that volunteer serves in more than one work plan. If a volunteer's services fall into multiple work plans, that volunteer should be included in the "total volunteers" count of each work plan where his/her service is included. However, that volunteer should be included in the "unduplicated volunteers" count in only one work plan. The volunteer should be counted in the area where he/she will make the most impact--in terms of the type of service or in terms of the scope of service, such as the greatest number of hours served.

9.2 What is a work plan?

A work plan is a part of the grant application used to show how the sponsoring organization's volunteers will serve in their communities and achieve specific results.

9.3 How frequently will I report on performance measures? How much time per month does it involve?

You will be required to submit a full progress report annually on your progress toward your targets. Additionally, you will report on outputs semi-annually.

As stated in the Notice, recipients are required to provide bi-annual progress reports and bi-annual financial and narrative progress reports through eGrants.
The time varies per grantee based on their internal recordkeeping. On average, CNCS expects a burden of about 4 hours per report.

9.4 As Senior Corps grants are for 3-year periods, do I need to achieve outcome targets annually or can I achieve the target at the end of the three-year period?

Work plans are developed with annual, not cumulative, goals in mind. You will set annual targets and report on achievements or outcomes at the end of each year. However, you will not be expected to reach annual targets until the end of the third year as we anticipate it may take the entire 3-year period of performance to stand up a new project or new work plan.

9.5 Are there any requirements for the percentage of volunteers placed in the Primary Focus Area?

No. Applications must include work plans that meet the national performance requirements. For every $1,000 in annual base federal funding, at least one unduplicated RSVP volunteer must be placed in work plans that result in outcomes.

9.6 How do we determine the Primary Focus Area?

The Primary focus area should represent the area in which an applicant aims to make the most impact. Applicants must identify a Primary focus area, and work plans must include service activity in the selected Primary focus area.

9.7 What is the difference between the Focus Areas and the funding priorities? Is it possible to focus volunteer efforts across these areas, in addition to the primary focus area?

The 6 Focus Areas are Disasters Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families. The applicant must select 1 of these as the primary focus area in eGrants.

The funding priorities are Evidence-based Program Implementation, Access to Care—Opioid Abuse, Aging in Place—Elder Justice, Aging in Place—Independent Living, Economic Opportunity—Workforce Development, Education—Intergenerational Programming, Disaster Services, and Veterans and Military Families. These funding priorities are not requirements for your application. These are areas that CNCS has particular interest in supporting. All of these funding priorities falls under the umbrella of at least 1 of the Focus Areas.

Your project can have multiple work plans in more than one Focus Area. You can even have work plans in every Focus Area, plus work plans for Other Community Priorities and Capacity Building.

If your volunteers are performing different service activities or are addressing different community needs, then they should be represented in different work plans.

10. Other

10.1. In the Executive Summary, should the service activities and sample outcomes listed be only from the Primary Focus Area?

The majority of service activities and outcomes listed should be from the Primary Focus Area, but other significant service activities and outcomes could be included from other Focus Areas.

10.2. Is there a contact person that I can send questions to about this competition?

All questions for this competition must be sent to 2021RSVP@cns.gov. Although there is not a contact person for one on one technical assistance, questions submitted to this inbox will receive responses through this FAQ document.

10.3. If an organization submits an application for this competition, is it obligated to remain in the competition until its completion, or can it withdraw its application at any time during the competition?

The organization can withdraw the application. If the organization does need to withdraw, please send an email as soon as possible to 2021RSVP@cns.gov at any time after grant application submission.

10.4. I would like to request information about the proposal in Spanish.

We do not currently have the grant application or supporting materials translated into languages other than English.

10.5. Where can I find a list of the current sponsor for an RSVP in my area?

A lists of incumbent sponsors and their service areas from the RSVP competitions can be found on the CNCS Funded Grants page: https://nationalservice.gov/grants-funding/funding-resources/funded-grants

10.6. Are partnerships with other agencies allowed?

Yes. Please refer to FAQ 5.9 for matching funds with federal agencies.

10.7. Can the organization's Board of Directors count as the Advisory Council?

Yes. However, according to 45 CFR 2553.24, the sponsor shall secure community participation in local project operation by establishing an Advisory Council or similar organization structure with a membership that includes people that are: (1) knowledgeable about human and social needs of the community, (2) competent in the field of community service and volunteerism, (3) capable of helping the sponsor meet its administrative and program responsibilities including fund-raising, publicity and programming for impact, (4) with an interest in and knowledge of the capability of older adults, and (5) of a diverse composition that reflects the demographics of the service area.

If the sponsor has a board that meets the purposes and requirements of all applicable RSVP program regulations (see 45 CFR Part 2553), it is permissible for some or all of the members of that board to also serve on the RSVP advisory council, as long as the advisory council is established and operated as entity separate from the sponsor; in other words, the advisory council must not be a part of the sponsor.

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10.8. Why has the deadline been extended from September 1, 2020, at 5 p.m. ET to September 3, 2020 p.m. ET?

A recent system issue occurred with the eGrants application system that has since been resolved. For a brief period, the system issue prevented the submission of applications to the FY 21 RSVP Competition. Accordingly, CNCS is extending the deadline for the submission of applications to **Thursday, September 3, 2020, at 5 p.m. ET.** The amended Notice is posted on the FY 21 RSVP Competition page. This system issue impacted the Performance Measures Module of eGrants.

For applicants that have already submitted a grant application, you can request to have your application returned to you by sending an email to 2021RSVP@cns.gov. Please include your Application ID Number and the Legal Applicant Name in your request. In cases where your application is returned to you for additional work, all

applicants are still required to adhere to the new deadline of **Thursday, September 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. ET.**

For questions about the FY 21 RSVP grant competition, email 2021RSVP@cns.gov. CNCS also offers live text chat at www.NationalService.gov/contact-us. For technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, call the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Potential applicants can also use this link: eGrants Questions. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the Notice to which the organization is applying.