

FY 2012 RSVP Relinquishment Funds Competition

New Grants and Augmentations

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document supplements the FY 2012 Relinquishment Funds Senior Corps Notice of Funding Opportunity for RSV Program and Application Instructions:

http://www.seniorcorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/NOTICE.asp
Applicability

APPLICABILITY	QUESTION
Augmentation	<p>1. For an augmentation proposal, should we assume the reviewers will not see our current grant narratives already entered into e-grants?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>2. If an existing RSVP grantee writes a proposal to increase its volunteer base - but due to the normal loss of volunteers in a given year the volunteer base remained similar in number would there be any consequences to the program in terms of the RSVP re-competition in 2013.</p> <p>No.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>3. We have two different main service activities, both of which will increase the ability of disabled or senior adults to continue to live independently. Can the two Work Plans that contain Performance Measures both have the same desired End Outcome?</p> <p>Yes.</p>
New	<p>4. Given that we will have to build up to the total number of new volunteers we are proposing, how many volunteers should be shown in the first year of the grant?</p> <p>Show the total number you expect to build up to. Explain your plans for recruiting these volunteers in your narrative.</p>
New	<p>5. The <i>Notice</i> recommends specific page limits to various parts of the application. Do the character limits included in the application instructions apply as well, ie 1500 for Executive Summary, 4,000 for the narrative sections B-E?</p> <p>No. The character limits that are included in the Senior Corps Grant Application instructions have been eliminated in eGrants.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>6. If extenuating circumstances make use of eGrants impossible, rather than sending a hard copy of the application, can an applicant send the application on a disk or thumb drive?</p> <p>No. If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, you may send a hard copy of the application to the address in Section VII. of the Notice, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier because of security-related delays in</p>

	<p>receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this Notice apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via e-Grants. CNCS does not accept applications submitted via fax, e-mail, thumb drive or disk.</p>
New	<p>7. What is the minimum amount of time a RSVP can volunteer?</p> <p>No minimum has been established. The RSVP program regulations state that “a RSVP volunteer shall serve weekly on a regular basis, or intensively on short-term assignments consistent with the assignment description.” [45 CFR 2553.51]</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>8. What is the time frame for a work plan?</p> <p>Work plans should reflect the time required to achieve the specified targets and may cover the entire 3-year grant performance period. Applicants for grant augmentations should develop work plans that cover the duration until the end of their grant period.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>9. Must all RSVP volunteers being proposed for a new project or an augmentation proposal be placed in impact/outcome based work plans?</p> <p>Applicants for a new grant must place 50% of their volunteers in impact based work plans. Applicants for grant augmentations must place all of their volunteers in impact based work plans.</p>
Augmentation	<p>10. For a grant augmentation proposal, should the RSVP volunteer services we propose to add be included in one of our current work plans or in a new work plan?</p> <p>For the additional volunteers you propose to add, you should create one or more new work plans. Later, if you receive an award, you will add the new work plan to your current grant.</p>
Augmentation	<p>11. For our augmentation proposal, do we need to discuss how we will assess performance against all the work plans or just the one with the outcome level performance measure?</p> <p>You should address how you will assess performance against all the work plans you propose.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>12. Is there any recommended number of work plans we should include in our application?</p> <p>No.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>13. How do we account in work plans for volunteers who are doing multiple assignments that relate to more than one work plan?</p> <p>An individual volunteer may be counted in more than one work plan.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>14. Can we place volunteers in programmatic activities our own agency?</p> <p>Yes if they meet the programmatic priority areas in the <i>Notice</i>.</p> <p>To quote the RSVP program regulations in 45 CFR 2553.61: “The grantee may function as a volunteer station, provided that no more than 5% of the total number of volunteers budgeted for the project are assigned to it in administrative or support positions. This limitation does not apply to the assignment of volunteers to other programs administered by the grantee or special volunteer activities of the project. The RSVP project itself may function as a volunteer station or may initiate special volunteer activities provided the Corporation agrees that these activities are in accord with program objectives and will not</p>

	hinder overall project operations.”
New	<p>15. Do we need to have a fully formed advisory group before we get an award?</p> <p>No.</p>
New	<p>16. Since we aren’t established in the new geographic area we will be working in, how do we prepare a station roster?</p> <p>Provide a tentative list based on those you plan to sign up.</p>
New	<p>17. What is the basis for reimbursing a grantee’s costs?</p> <p>Grantees draw funds based on actual cash needs from the Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System (HHS/PMS). If you receive an award and are not currently drawing funds in this manner, Corporation staff will work with you to get your account set up. Costs must be consistent with the approved grant budget and allowable under the applicable OMB Cost Principles found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_circulars/</p>
Augmentation	<p>18. Is there a cap on the amount of funding we can request to augment our current grant?</p> <p>No.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>19. What is the relationship between the selection criteria and the Senior Corps Grant Application instructions concerning the content of the various sections of the application?</p> <p>The proposal selection criteria are general criteria applied to assessing the application as a whole. They do not necessarily correspond directly to particular sections of the application.</p>
New	<p>20. Can we propose a project in an un-served area where there was no relinquishment?</p> <p>No. However, proposals may include projects that cover areas previously served by a relinquished grant and adjacent un-served areas.</p>
Augmentation	<p>21. May a group or association of RSVP projects submit a joint proposal to augment each of their grants?</p> <p>Yes. It is possible to submit an augmentation application involving multiple RSVP projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participating projects would have to be eligible. • One lead organization would submit the application in eGrants, again identifying all the members of the collaboration and how the volunteers would be distributed among them all. <p>If the application is selected, the state office would notify each member project that they can submit an amendment request for their respective share of the award.</p>
Augmentation	<p>22. Our grant year is April – March and we are planning to apply for a grant augmentation. If successful, we won’t receive the funds until September 2012. Would we be required to recruit and place the number of additional volunteers we propose by the end of that 6 month period?</p> <p>Not necessarily. For example, if you propose to augment your current volunteer corps with another 50 volunteers, you would indicate in your application by when you</p>

	anticipate bringing the additional 50 on board.
New	<p>23. If our state RSVP association applies for a new grant, does this preclude the RSVP projects in that same state from applying individually?</p> <p>No.</p>
Augmentation	<p>24. May a current RSVP grantee submit an augmentation proposal to expand RSVP volunteer services in a programmatic area that the RSVP volunteers are already addressing, if those services are to be delivered within the project’s existing geographic service area?</p> <p>Yes if the programming meets the Veterans and Military service focus as prescribed by the <i>Notice</i>. For the purposes of this <i>Notice</i>, expansion of services within a currently served geographic area is considered new programmatic activity.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>25. Who gets priority – grant augmentations or new projects?</p> <p>To the extent possible, our goal is to return RSVP resources to geographic areas previously served by RSVP.</p>
New	<p>26. For a current grantee, if you are establishing a new freestanding project, how does it relate to your project on an on-going basis and do the funds come through your current project?</p> <p>The funds would not come through your current grant.</p>
New	<p>27. If a current grantee wants to establish a new RSVP project in a previously served geographic area, must the new project be managed as a separate, independent grant with its own project director and project staff?</p> <p>Yes. Each project must be managed as a separate grant, each of which carries the same fiscal and program responsibilities as any other CNCS funded RSVP grant, including the assignment of a full-time project director, unless you can justify assigning a project director for less than full time in your management narrative when you submit your full application. You would propose managing the project with a separate full time project director or a plan for managing the new project with less than a full-time project director. We typically require a full-time director, but there could be a case where a project director splits their time between two projects.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>28. If we propose two different types of services, such as mentoring and support of independent living, should these be in one work plan or separate work plans?</p> <p>Since the needs and impact results would be different for each, separate work plans for each type of service is recommended.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>29. How should we regard the statements in the <i>Notice</i> that augmentations have a minimum of 20 RSVP volunteers and new projects are estimated to have 350 RSVP volunteers?</p> <p>Proposals for augmentation grants must have a minimum of 20 volunteers; there is no maximum. Proposals for new projects may have an estimated 350 RSVP volunteers; you should propose the number of volunteers appropriate for your community and the objectives of your application.</p>
New	<p>30. Does the list of geographic areas posted at the <i>Notice</i> APPENDIX A show the areas available to be served by new projects?</p>

	<p>Yes. The list shows the geographic areas previously served by a project that was voluntarily relinquished.</p>
Augmentation and New	<p>31. Can the competition funds be used to purchase a wheelchair equipped mini bus to transport shut ins, wounded warriors, etc., to and from community programs?</p> <p>No. This program does not fund equipment, such as a bus for this purpose.</p>
New	<p>32. Must an existing grantee applying only for the purpose of serving a new project area, address at least one of the six Focus Areas listed in the Notice.</p> <p>Yes. As stated in the <i>Notice</i>, funding priorities for New Grants require that all Senior Corps volunteers be placed in assignments that address one or more of the six Focus Areas from the CNCS’s Strategic Plan.</p>
New	<p>33. Section VI. Award Administration Information of the Notice states that awards for successful application will be issued by late September 2012. What period of time will grant funds be available to spend?</p> <p>We anticipate completing announcement of the results of this competition by September 2012, and awarding grants with a start date of no later than September 30, 2012. Grants will be made for a three-year performance period, with funding provided one year at a time, contingent on satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, and the availability of Congressional appropriations.. Before the end of the first and second budget years, recipients will receive guidance on submitting a continuation application for the subsequent year of operation.</p>
New	<p>34. Does a “new” project have three years to recruit the target number of unduplicated volunteers?</p> <p>Yes. An RSVP project does not have to recruit the target number of new volunteers in the first year of the grant period. We only estimate that new RSVP projects will enroll an average of 300 RSVP volunteers in their first year based on historical experience. The estimated average federal cost per RSVP volunteer is \$350; the actual cost may differ depending upon the particulars of the program.</p> <p>It is the Corporation’s expectation that grantees will make every effort to carefully assess their ability to recruit new volunteers and place new volunteers in service projects as soon as possible.</p>
Augmentation	<p>35. For an augmentation proposal, are any of the following acceptable? a) a new work plan in an existing service area, b) expansion into new unserved areas using current work plans c) expansion into an unserved area with a new work plan?</p> <p>Yes. An existing RSVP grantee may apply for an augmentation of its current grant for expansion of an existing project within its currently approved geographic service area or into a new unserved geographic area which meets the programming criteria for Grant Augmentations focusing on Veterans and family members of military service members specified in the <i>Notice</i>. If an award is made, the grantee will receive instructions on how to integrate the augmentation work plan(s) into the current grant.</p>
Augmentation	<p>36. Can an RSVP grantee applying to receive a grant augmentation partner with another agency that also receives federal funding from another federal agency?</p> <p>Yes. An RSVP project may partner with another agency in many ways including asking the partner to serve as a volunteer station. The RSVP grantee must serve as the applicant for an augmentation under this <i>Notice</i>. Note that unless the statute authorizing another</p>

	federal government program provides for the use of that program’s funds to be used to meet the grantee match or cost share requirement, it is not possible to use federal funds for the match or cost share requirement.
Augmentation	37. Is there a matching funds requirement for current RSVP programs? Yes. See the <i>Notice</i> , Section III.4. Non-federal Share Requirements for All Applicants
New	38. 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.
Augmentation and New	39. Will applicants garner any special consideration for providing matching funds beyond the required minimum percentage? No.
Augmentation and New	40. Will cash or in-kind contributions be accepted as part of match? 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.”
Augmentation and New	41. Are there any restrictions regarding the amount that may be requested? No.
Augmentation	42. Is a grantee of a non-Corporation funded RSVP project whose only Corporation funding resulted from a PNS grant augmentation under a previous competition, considered a current RSVP grantee? Yes.
Augmentation and New	43. Can federal agency funding be used to meet the non-federal share requirement? No. Unless the statute authorizing another federal government program provides for the use of that program’s funds to be used to meet the grantee match or cost share requirement, it is not possible to use federal funds for the match or cost share requirement. Neither the Corporation’s statutes nor the Older Americans Act, contain such a provision.
Augmentation and New	44. Is the grantee of a current non-Corporation funded RSVP project considered a "grantee" for this competition? Yes.
Augmentation and New	45. Does the average federal cost per RSVP volunteer of \$350 cover all costs associated with an RSVP volunteer, both administrative costs as well as the cost of such volunteer benefits as required insurance, mileage reimbursement, and meals where applicable? Yes.

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