# 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition
## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – March 31, 2017

This document supplements the 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition Senior Corps Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions. These FAQs will be updated periodically. New or updated questions will be clearly indicated within each section.

## Sections

## 1. AWARD INFORMATION
Updated March 10, 2017
1.1. Is a separate application needed for each service area listed in Appendix A?

No. However, if you are applying to multiple counties across different states, you will need to complete one application per state. You would include all of the counties in that state that you wish to serve.

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 below:

RSVP regulation 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.

Added March 7, 2017
1.4. What is the project period for the FY 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition?

The initial project period will start September 1, 2017 and end on March 31, 2018. Subsequent project periods will be 12 months in duration, April 1 through March 31.


## 2.  ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

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

Yes.

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 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, are we eligible to apply?

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. An applicant may apply for more than one geographic service area listed in Appendix A in one application.

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

As specified in 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.

Added February 21, 2017
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.

<span style="color:red">Updated March 17, 2017</span>
3.4. The Grant Application Instructions say to include the narrative components listed for STRENTHENING 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.

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 2017RSVPattachments@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.

Added February 13, 2017
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.

<span style="color:red">Updated February 13, 2017</span>
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 can be used to reflect the amount of non-federal cash and in-kind contributions generated by a sponsor in excess of the required percentage.  If time is spent on fundraising, the Excess column should reflect the amount of time spent on fundraising.

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?

No.  The exception to this is if the funds are specifically designated from the federal agency to be used as match on a federal grant.  Or, if the funds pass through another entity, as is the case with Community Service Block Grant Funds.  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?

Typically, 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 the OMB Circulars, 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.

Updated March 17, 2017
5.15. This NOFO funds RSVP volunteers at a rate of $1000/per volunteer while the average cost of an RSVP volunteer is approximately $200/per volunteer. Can you please describe the rationale for this decision?

As required by the Serve America Act of 2009, Congress has mandated that RSVP programs be linked to outcomes through the use of National Performance Measures.  The cost per volunteer requirement is tied to a minimum number of volunteers in outcome-based assignments or evidence-based health education assignments. In setting the rate at $1000 per volunteer engaged in performance measures that lead to outcomes or in specific evidence based program models, this NOFO provides flexibility for RSVP projects to develop service activities that can be relied upon to meet or exceed the new National Performance Measures. The opportunity also provides greater flexibility for RSVP projects to engage in evidence-based programming that is highly impactful. Such evidence-based programming includes intensive training for all volunteers which cost significantly more to manage and operate.  Overall, the rate per volunteer allows CNCS's RSVP program to demonstrate great community impact through performance measures and alignment with programs that already have proof of evidence.

In addition, an RSVP project is not limited to the cost per volunteer that meets performance measure requirements. An applicant can propose a project design that supports additional volunteers in output-based service activities or other community priorities. This may reduce the overall cost per volunteer supported by the project.

5.16. Is the $75,000 expected minimum grant level for the first year budget or 3 years? Is the annual review the mechanism that approves the 2nd of 3rd year at the $75,000 minimum level?

Senior Corps makes grant awards annually over a three-year period of performance. This means that, in general, a grant is awarded at the same level in years 2 and 3 as it is awarded in the first year. In other words, the grant award for the first year's budget would be the same grant award for the 2nd and 3rd years. Please note that continuation of funding for the 2nd and 3rd years is not guaranteed and is dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The annual assessment refers to a grant requirement that can be met in year two or three of the grant's operation. It is defined in RSVP regulation 45 CFR 2553.23(g).

5.17. In the Program Area of Education, they will be involving senior volunteers as mentors in the local K-12 school districts.  To coordinate and match volunteers with the youth, collect data and manage the grant generally, they would like to charge staff time which seems allowable under the guidance.  However, is it allowable to use staff time as in-kind as well or a combination of the two?   If you could advise, we would certainly appreciate it.
CNCS is not able to provide specific advice on competitive applications. In general, RSVP grants may be used to support staff and other operational costs. Please see 45 CFR 2553 for program-specific regulations and 2 CFR 200 for OMB regulations that govern grant program requirements and allowable grant costs.

5.18. Is there a maximum amount that can be requested?

There is no maximum amount that can be requested. CNCS anticipates funding approximately $3 million for this competition.

5.19. What is the average or typical range of first year grants?
The averages range from year to year during competition. You can find a list of awarded grants from past competitions here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition. From here you can scroll down to the Database of Submitted Applications to select the name of the Grant Competition, "Senior Corps RSVP Competition". You have the choice to select the Fiscal Year and State (optional). This will list the organization's first year award amount.

The minimum funding amount is $75,000.

5.20. Can RSVP funds by used to hire a data manager?

According to 45 CFR 2253.25, the sponsor's responsibility must employ a project director to accomplish objectives and manage the functions and activities delegated to project staff for Senior Corps programs within its control. A full-time project director shall not serve concurrently in another capacity, paid or unpaid, during established working hours. The project director may participate in activities to coordinate program resources with those of related local agencies, boards or organizations.

The regulations also state that the sponsor can provide levels of staffing and resources appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the project and carry out its project management responsibilities.

5.21. 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.

5.22. 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 and Administering the Grant Budget for Senior Corps Programs:
https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/moodle/sc_preparing_the_grant_budget/viewea81.html?id=3203&chapterid=2088.

You can find a list of awarded grants from past competitions here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition. From here you can scroll down to the Database of Submitted Applications to select the name of the Grant Competition, "Senior Corps RSVP Competition". You have the choice to select the Fiscal Year and State (optional).

Added February 13, 2017
5.23. What is the typical salary range for the program director?

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

Added March 7, 2017
5.24. I am interested in serving more than 1 county. Is the $75,000 for each county or can I come in at any funding amount?

The funding amount that you request in your application should cover the counties you intend to serve. The minimum funding amount is not per county.

Added March 7, 2017
5.25. 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.

Added March 7, 2017
5.26. 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 logistics related to merging grants with your state office if and when the grant is awarded.

Added March 10, 2017
5.27. 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: http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-

[idx?SID=fb853622c6ed47b20285496dec375f15&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5](idx?SID=fb853622c6ed47b20285496dec375f15&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5). Please refer to 2 CFR 200.34, 200.305, and 200.306 for specific language.

<span style="color:red">Added March 17, 2017</span>
5.28. If the initial project period is September 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 (7 months), should we submit a project budget based on 7 months or 12 months?

The application budget should be based on 12 months of funding. The application budget should be based on 12 months of funding. Prior to award, the annual award amount will be prorated accordingly.

<span style="color:red">Added March 17, 2017</span>
5.29. 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 that supports a non-RSVP program in a sponsoring organization may not be used as match on an RSVP grant.

<span style="color:red">Added March 31, 2017</span>
5.30. 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.


## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

6.1. If our audit is not done for this year, can we submit last year's audit?

Yes.  The instructions say to submit your most recent audit.  If this year's audit is not finished, then the previous year's audit is the most recent audit.

6.2. When sending the attachments to 2017RSVPAttachments@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.

6.3. 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. In that case, you would send a copy of that document as part of your application.

6.4. What is a statement of audit status and who is responsible for submitting an audit to the Audit Clearinghouse?

The statement of audit status is simply a short written statement from your organization that includes all of the information requested in item 11 of the document table on page 42 of the Grant Application Instructions. If your organization is subject to an A-133 audit, also known as the Single Audit, your organization is responsible for submitting it the Audit Clearinghouse.

6.5. Should information entered in the Aggregate Dollar Amount of Funding Form be for all funding for the entire organization, or only for the RSVP project?

The information should be for all funding for the organization.

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

The station roster is not a required document for this competition. If your application is selected for funding, the station roster will be submitted at a later time. Your application should be submitted in eGrants without the station roster section completed.

6.7. The Financial Management Survey doesn't allow the yes/no boxes to be marked with an 'x.' How do I mark these boxes?

You can place an 'X' beside the checkbox that you are answering. You may also print out the survey, mark the boxes by hand and then scan the survey and email it to 2017RSVPAttachments@cns.gov.

6.8. What exactly is the Recipient Contact Form that is listed in the document chart on pages 42 of the Grant Application Instructions?

The Recipient Contact Form is used to set up an account in the Payment Management System, which is the system used to provide grant funds from CNCS to grantee organizations. The Recipient Contact Form is not required to be submitted at this time.

6.9. In reviewing the required attachments for the 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition, I notice there were some that were requested as part of the Financial Management Survey that were also listed in the Required Supplemental Documents chart. Do we need to submit two copies of these documents?

No.  One copy of each document is sufficient.

6.10. Our organization is a department within city government. Does the Financial Management Survey need to be completed as though it is for the entire city government or only for our department?

The Financial Management Survey should be completed for the entire city government.

6.11. 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.

6.12. Where do I obtain a Federal Financial Report User Form, SF-1199A, and Recipient Contact Form?

These forms are not to be submitted at this time.  They are the forms that need to be completed in order to set up an account with the Payment Management System, which is the online system used by CNCS to deposit grant funds.  When CNCS requests these forms from an applicant organization, copies of the blank forms will be emailed directly to the Authorized Representative and Project Director listed for the application in eGrants. Only those organizations that do not currently have an account in the Payment Management System will receive a request for the forms.

6.13. Some of the documents we are sending are very large.  Can they still be received by the 2017RSVPattachments@cns.gov inbox?  What if the documents are too large for me to email?

The attachments inbox is set up to accommodate extremely large emails.  If you are having challenges sending to the inbox, you may need to contact your technical support personnel at your organization to learn more about scanning and attaching smaller versions of documents. Do not mail documents.

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

You can visit the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website: http://harvester.census.gov/sac/. 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: http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6620b6d2377317ce9d56fabdf18c2d54&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#sg2.1.200.a.sg0.

6.15. On the Financial Management Survey, the last bullet under Section A, there is a request for a "List of federal grants, contracts, and sub-contracts using federal funds awarded to the

organization in the last two years including the contract numbers, amounts and awarding agencies." We will be providing the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards in our audited financial statements for the last fiscal year. In order to satisfy the two year requirement, does this mean we should submit the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards for the 2 previous years?

The documents submitted should cover the last two years, going back to approximately January 2014. You should submit information that extends back two years.

6.16. The NOFA states that applicants are required to complete the new recipient payment account form, but the egrants list states that this is not required until requested. Should we send this form in as part of the grant application requirement?

The New Recipient Payment Account Form is not required at the time of the grant application submission but you can submit the form. If awarded the grant, you will have to complete the form and necessary instructions to get set up in the system.

6.17. What is the standard form for the Aggregate Dollar Amount of Funding Form?

The standard form is located on the competition website (www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition) under the Required Documents section.

6.18. There is a discrepancy in the Grant Application Instructions and the Notice on where to send our required documents? Where should we send those documents?

Please refer to the Notice. All required documents should be submitted electronically to 2017RSVPAttachments@cns.gov with the following subject line: 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition Additional Documents – Legal Applicant Name and Application ID number. Applicants are required to submit all documents by the application submission deadline, April 4, 2017.

6.19. I am a current Senior Corps grantee, should I be following the column for 'New Competitive' or 'Current Senior Corps Grantee'.

Current grantees can follow the Current Senior Corps Grantee column. Be sure to select the appropriate drop down field in eGrants for each of the required documents.


## 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.  [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=b85e59ebf62526e584950250495a9120&node=45:4.1.9.11.35.6&rgn=div6](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=b85e59ebf62526e584950250495a9120&node=45:4.1.9.11.35.6&rgn=div6)
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.

<span style="color:red">Added February 10, 2017</span>
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.

<span style="color:red">Added February 10, 2017</span>
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. However, a sponsor that serves as an RSVP volunteer station may only place up to 5% of the total number of volunteers in administrative support positions within the sponsoring organization. See 45 CFR 2553.61.

<span style="color:red">Added February 13, 2017</span>
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.

<span style="color:red">Added March 17, 2017</span>
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.

<span style="color:red">Added March 31, 2017</span>

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 a county and some include both a county 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 measureable 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. How were the grant opportunities selected in the RSVP Expansion NOFA?

Service Areas included in the 2017 RSVP Expansion NOFO (Appendix A) are eligible because there is no current RSVP project covering the area. Theses vacant service are eligible because a previous grantee relinquished their grant or no RSVP project ever served the area.

The RSVP Expansion NOFA provides the process to apply for a three-year grant. Each successful applicant will need to successfully complete a highly rigorous application process that includes being able to make a sufficient showing that the applicant is able to meet or exceed new National Performance Measures, and/or provide evidence-based programming.

8.4. 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.

8.5. What is the minimum funding amount for each geographic service area listed in Appendix A?

The minimum funding amount that an applicant can come in at is $75,000 regardless of the county size and population.

Added March 7, 2017

8.6. 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.


## 9. PERFORMANCE MEASURE

RSVP Performance Measure questions received during the 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition will be added below as they are received. **Questions will not be answered that ask for guidance on which Performance Measure to select for a specific activity.** 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 most 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.

Updated February 13, 2017

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 on page 18, 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 Do the funding priorities (Elder Justice, Education Intergenerational, Access to Care: Opioid Abuse, etc.) fall under the current RSVP Performance Measures? If they do what Focus Areas and objectives do they fall under? How do we know if these work plans will have outcomes?

Yes, all of the funding priorities fall under the current RSVP Performance Measures. The funding priorities fall under Economic Opportunity, Education, and Healthy Futures. Please refer to pages 2 -7 of Appendix B: RSVP Performance Measures Instructions to see the objectives for each Focus Area on the website: www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition. In Appendix B, you will notice the Focus Areas' outputs, service activities, and outcomes associated with each objective.

Added February 13, 2017
9.6. I would like to talk with the appropriate person about the potential of our national organization being an applicant to expand intergenerational education programming by taping the talent of retired faculty and staff from institutions of higher education.

You will have the opportunity to learn and ask questions about the 6 funding priorities in the RSVP in Action Series (sessions) listed on the training website: https://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvp-expansion-competition-training-opportunities.

Added February 13, 2017
9.7. Can the volunteers be phased in over the three years? For example, we would recruit and train 20 volunteers in year 1, 20 in year 2, and 20 in year 30 for a total of 60 volunteers who will be active through year 3?

The Notice states that the cost per volunteer is $1,000 for year 3. If you are requesting the minimum funding amount of $75,000, you will be required to have at least 75 unduplicated volunteers in outcome based work plans or outputs in health education programming by the end of year 3.

9.8. In the funding priorities listed, "Education – Intergenerational Programming: applicants address ways to increase older adult engagement with young people in the areas of school readiness and K-12 success." Can this include head start programs?

Yes, this falls within school readiness. Please refer to Appendix B National Performance Measures Instructions.

9.9. Where can I find examples of evidence-based programs?

In the Evidence-based Programs and Registries document, located under the Resources for Applicants section on the competition website (www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition), there are some examples of evidence-based programs and federal registries.

9.10. 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. By year 3 every $1,000 in annual base federal funding, at least one unduplicated RSVP volunteer must be placed in work plans that result in outcomes or volunteers must be engaged in an evidence-based program that results in outputs in health education programming.

9.11. Does meal delivery and brief check-ins in private homes count as in-home services?

No.

9.12. 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.

9.13. 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 6 funding priorities are Evidence-based Program Implementation, Elder Justice, Education (Intergenerational Programming, Access to Care (Opioid Abuse), Aging in Place (Transportation), and Economic Opportunity (Housing). 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.

Yes. 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.

9.14. Where can I find the measurement used in the output instrument or outcome instrument for the funding priorities?

In Appendix B, the complete list of RSVP national performance measures are listed by Focus Area on page 2 – 7. In those tables, the objectives, outputs, service activities, and outcomes (if any) are listed reading the table left to right. The output measures may or may not have outcomes.

The funding priorities may not be directly stated in Appendix B. However, the objectives will list the output, service activities, and outcomes (if any) that would be associated with that funding priority.

For additional information on how the funding priorities align with our performance measures, you can listen to the webinar recordings available here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvp-expansion-competition-training-opportunities. Under the RSVP in Action Series, there are 3 sessions entitled: (1) Focus on Evidence-based Programming and Elder Justice; (2) Focus on Education-Intergenerational Programming and Access to Care-Opioid Abuse; and (3) Focus on Aging in Place-Transportation and Economic Opportunity- Housing.

9.15. Where can I find sample measurement tools for RSVP outputs and outcomes? The link in Appendix B does not work.

The National Performance Measures instruments for RSVP are located here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/national-performance-measure-instruments-rsvp. For each performance measure, you can click the link to find the "How to Calculate/Measure/Collect Data".


## 10. OTHER

10.1. How do I know if my Notification of Intent to Apply was received?

You should have received an automatic reply if your Notification of Intent to Apply was successfully submitted.  You should receive an email confirmation of your submission. These are sent on a weekly basis. However you may print this page for your records. A Notification of Intent to Apply is highly encouraged but is not required.

10.2. 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.

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

All questions for this competition must be sent to 2017RSVP@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.

10.4. 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 2017RSVP@cns.gov at any time after grant application submission.

10.5. Why is the RSVP Expansion NOFA open to those who have not, or are not currently, operating RSVP programs?

In 2012, Congress established a competition framework for RSVP which opened up the process to all public, private, faith-based, veteran-service and not-for profit organizations. Opening up the competition beyond the existing grantee portfolio responds to the Congressional mandate and allows CNCS to support high quality applicants who may have ineligible in the past.

10.6. 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.

10.7. Will there be a Senior Corps grant released later this year for Native American Tribes?

All available and open funding opportunities are located on our website under the Funding Opportunities: https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities.

10. 8. 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 FOIA page:  http://www.nationalservice.gov/site-policy-and-notices/foia-and-privacy-act/electronic-reading-room-and-library.

10.9. Are partnerships with other agencies allowed?

Yes.

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

10.10. 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.