Frequently Asked Questions
FY2017 Day of Service Funding Opportunities
Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (MLK)
September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance (September 11)
Updated February 21, 2017

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides the Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice) and the Day of Service Grant Application Instructions as the primary sources of information about the requirements of this grant competition. The FAQ resource is intended to provide further clarification, where necessary, and does not replace or override the information contained in the published requirements.

1 General Application Submission and Notice Questions

1.1 Can I receive one-on-one technical assistance to answer my questions about this competition?

No, there is not a one-on-one technical assistance process as part of this grant competition. Questions submitted to DayofService@cns.gov will be answered via email and posted in this FAQ resource on the competition website as appropriate to ensure all applicants receive the same information.

1. 2 My organization is interested in applying for both MLK and September 11 funding. How do we submit applications for both Days of Service?

To apply for both Days of Service funding opportunities, you will need to submit two separate applications in eGrants. Specific guidance on this is addressed on page 5 of the Application Instructions. The budget and performance measures should be completed for each application. However, only the narrative section of the September 11 application should be completed. In the narrative for the MLK application, enter 'See September 11 application ID # [add corresponding application ID #]'.

Link Updated 2/9/17
1.3 Where can I find information about the results of previous September 11 and MLK Grant competitions?

Results can be found at: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition

1.4 What are the different ways that an organization can implement a Day of Service award?

There are four possible ways to implement a Day of Service award (Notice, page 3)
Type of Award:

a. Pass-through entity: A pass-through entity selects subrecipients on a competitive basis through a sub-grant. Pass-through applicants should clearly describe their plan for subawarding in their application narrative. Subawards are to be made in annual amounts of $1,000 or more, per year. A pass-through entity does not plan activities for the Day of Service. Instead, only the subrecipients plan Day of Service activities.

b. Subgranting organization: A subgranting organization selects subrecipients on a competitive basis through a sub-grant. Subgranting organizations should clearly describe their plan for subawarding in their application narrative. Subawards are to be made in annual amounts of $1,000 or more, per year. A subgranting organization plans activities for the Day of Service and their subgrantees also plan activities for the Day of Service.

c. Partnership coordinators: A partnership coordinator works with partner organizations but may select them on a noncompetitive basis. The partnership plan should be clearly described in the narrative.

d. Sole entity: A sole entity does not provide any subaward funding. Instead, the applicant organization plans and implements all Day of Service activities.

ADDED 1/6/17
1.5 The Notice includes a section that describes Funding Priorities. What does it mean for an application to receive priority?

If an application meets the description listed in the Funding Priority section of the Notice, this will be taken into consideration during recommendation of the portfolio for selection by the CEO. Generally, when applications are determined to be equal in substance, receiving priority consideration means that a particular application will move in line ahead of an otherwise equal application. Of course, as stated in the Notice, 'priority consideration does not guarantee funding.'

1.6 The Notice states (on page 9) that there must be at least 10 service locations for each Day of Service. How are service locations defined?

It is up to the applicant to define a service location. A service location may be a neighborhood, a city, regional to cover multiple states, or some other area. The idea is for each applicant organization to have plans for at least 10 service events.

1.7 If my organization submits two applications, one each for MLK and September 11, with narratives included for both, will both narratives be read and reviewed?

No. Please review page 5 of the Application Instructions. If both narratives are completed, only the September 11th narrative will be reviewed.

1.8 What is the CNCS definition of "youth" as listed in the priority section? Up to 18 years old or would college students count?

Yes, college students do count.

1.9 Do factors like geographic location, Funding priorities, and a cash match make an application more competitive?

The Notice addresses the factors considered in the review and selection process on Page 13:

h. Selection for Funding
The review and selection process is designed to:
- identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application review criteria
- build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
    o CNCS Funding Priorities (See Section A.2. Funding Priorities)
    o meaningful representation of
        ▪ geographic diversity
        ▪ rural communities
        ▪ small and medium programs
        ▪ faith-based organizations
        ▪ Focus Area representation
        ▪ high ratio of match and/or other revenue to CNCS investment

1.10 Typically CNCS performance measures are to be measured over a one year period. How do the CNCS performance measures fit for Days of Service?

The measures identified in the Notice are outputs only and should be measurable for a day of service event. As stated on Notice page 18, applicants may also develop their own measures.

1.11 How do I know if my proposed project is a good proposal for this competition?

Individual feedback on proposals is not provided in an open competition. To help you assess whether your proposal is viable for this competition, review your idea against the funding priorities section of the NOFA on page 2, the performance measures beginning on page 18 of the NOFA, and the selection criteria in the NOFA. You can also review funded applications from the previous competitions (2015) in the CNCS *Results of Grant Competitions* page—keep in mind, there are that some requirements will vary each year.

Added 2/9/17
1.12 Do all partnerships or subgrantee agreements need to be in place and partners named at the time the application is submitted?

No. Please review FAQ 1.4 for more information about partnerships and subgranting. The information on partnerships and subgrantee agreements should be described in detail in the application. Partners do not have to be named at the time the application is submitted.

2 Budget

2.1 What amount should be included in the application budget submitted?

Enter your annual request for the first funding year.

Added 1/6/17
2.2 Can Day of Service funds be used to train AmeriCorps members?

Yes, as long as a connection can be made between training the members and implementing Day of Service activities. Funds cannot be used for training alone.

2.3 Where can I learn what budget items are allowable and unallowable?

Pleases review the Notice carefully and consider if the cost is reasonable, necessary, allocable and allowable per **2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E**. In considering these items see especially 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.403, 200.404, 200.405.

2.4 According to the Notice, it states that the minimum funding request is $50,000. The Notice also states this is a three-year project period. Is the minimum $50,000 to cover the three year period ($50,000 over three years or about $16,000 per year) or is the minimum request really $150,000 ($50,000 each year)?

The minimum funding request is $50,000 per year. The budget submitted should be a one year request. In the second and third years, a continuation application could be submitted for continuation funding.

2.5 Please provide an example of what it means to match 70% of the total project budget, as required for MLK.

An applicant must provide at least 70% of the total project budget. If $80,000 in CNCS funding were requested from CNCS, $187,241 in non-federal funding would need to be provided by the applicant as match. This brings the total project budget to $267,241. The applicant share of $187,241 is 70% of the total project budget, meeting the required 70% non-federal share. The eGrants budget will help you identify the CNCS and match percentages.

Added 2/9/17
2.6 Are there requirements about how much of the match can be cash and how much can be in-kind?

No. The match can be any combination of cash or in-kind or could be solely cash or in-kind.

2.7 The technical assistance call held on February 6 included information about a grantee meeting that may be held as part of the National Conference on Volunteering and Service. How much should be estimated specifically for conference registration?

Current registration information for the National Conference on Volunteering and Service can be found here: http://www.volunteeringandservice.org/rates/. Grant review results may not be announced in time for early bird registration, so please estimate using the CNCS Grantee amount for regular registration.

Added 2/21/2017
2.8 How should our organization's plan to act as a pass through entity, provide subgrants, or work with partners be represented in the budget?

If you intend to provide funding to any other organizations, this should be represented in the budget as a line item (or multiple line items) in the Other Support Costs section of the budget. The line item (or multiple line items) should include detail to show the number of organizations you intend to support and the amount of funding provided to each.

3 Program Implementation

3.1 If an application is selected for award, what is the first Day of Service for MLK and September 11?

The first September 11 Day of Service for this competition is September 11, 2017. The first MLK Day of Service for this competition is January 15, 2018. If selected, the expectation is that the organization would plan Day of Service events for the next three September 11 or MLK Days of Service as applicable and contingent on funding of continuation applications and federal appropriations.

Added 1/26/2017
3.2 Can currently serving VISTAs take part in supporting the activities of the grant?

Yes but only as community volunteers unless the VISTAs are placed on the project/grant and the specific activities are part of the approved VISTA Project Application and the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD). However, be aware that the cost of the VISTA's time as part of the support cannot be used as grant match. The uniform administrative requirements for Federal awards provide that cost sharing or matching funds on an award such as the Day of Service grants cannot be paid by the Federal government under some other award, unless there is some specific statutory authority to do so. There is no authority under either the National and Community Service Act (which governs MLK Day grants) or the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (which governs VISTA) which would allow this. Using the cost of a VISTA's time as part of a Day of Service grant matching requirement would violate the restriction in 2 CFR sec. 200.306.