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Learning Systems International]
FY 2021 FGP SCP Series Submitting Your Application in eGrants Session 5

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15:32:23 >> This meeting is being recorded

15:32:29 >> Hello everyone good afternoon and thank you for joining us for the fifth session submitting your application in eGrants. Let's get started with housekeeping notes.

15:32:41 All lines are on mute and we will keep them that way throughout the call and if you have questions, let us know in the Q&A pod.

15:32:48 If you have technical issues, let us know in the chat or use the razor hand feature. When you use the chat, please send message to all panelists and attendees.

15:33:04 Today's audios being broadcast by phone and online. We are recording the call if you don't wish to be recorded, disconnect at any time.

15:33:05 The recording and slides will be made available on the competition website.

15:33:31 Welcome everyone and on the screen right now you will see two links, one is to the competition mailbox and the second is to the competition website and thank you for adding those to the chatbox.

15:33:44 If after today you have questions, feel free to send email to the competition mailbox and all the resources we talk about today are linked on the competition website page.

15:33:53 I am joined today by Debbie Truchon, who you will see in the Q&A, and you will hear from her later on today.

15:34:11 We have made it to the end of cycle number two. Today is our last call. If you missed any of the previous calls, have no fear, each call is recorded and you can access them on the competition website.

15:34:27 We have a couple of poll questions. We would like to know who in the audience has received federal grant before including one from AmeriCorps or CNCS.

15:34:54 Okay. For the next question -- how well do you know AmeriCorps Seniors, formerly known as SeniorCorps?

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15:35:04 Couple more seconds to lock in your answers.

15:35:15 All right. Next question -- how would you describe primary field of your organization?

15:35:40 All right. The next question -- how did you hear about us?

15:36:01 The last question -- have you attended any of our other webinars in this series?

15:36:12 Looks unanimous and welcome back everyone.

15:36:35 Here is our agenda for today. For the content for today, we will go over competition basics and we will do that quickly since looks like a lot of you have gotten it for me before maybe more than once and then we shift focus of the webinar to the eGrants system.

15:36:59 We are currently accepting applications for AmeriCorps Seniors FGP/SCP programs and you could start your application right now and submit it between now and 5:00 PM, Eastern, February 3.

15:37:30 For this competition, we are looking to expand into geographic service areas listed on Appendix A. We have a map on the next page color-coded showing open states in green we've got those states that are open for SCP and red is FGP. And then opportunities for both programs.

15:37:52 Here is Appendix A and we list all of the areas. In this competition you get to propose a geographic service area, amount of funding and the number of VSYs, stipended volunteer service years that you wish to serve in your community.

15:38:07 Appendix A is the appendix to the NOFO, notice of funding opportunities which is one of the many resources used and where you could find a lot of the answers to the questions you have like the ones on the screen right now.

15:38:29 The NOFO is your gateway to the competition. It is your map to the competition, which means all the information you need will either be available in the document or linked to in the document.

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15:38:40 You find that on the competition website. This is where you should start, read it upside down and backwards and it's a very critical document.

15:38:54 Couple other resources that I will share to get you through the application process -- in addition to the NOFO, we have grant application instructions, step-by-step guide to navigating the electronic grants management system similar to the next half of the call.

15:39:16 Appendix A, Appendix B, national performance measures instructions, work -- work plan development worksheets which are helpful to you as you try to think about your work plans and how you communicate your work plans and performance measures to us.

15:39:42 And then the FAQs. All of these resources are available on the competition website and if you don't get the information that you need from those resources, please send an email to 2021_fgpscp@cns.gov.

15:40:03 I will start off with key tools and tips for using eGrants. EGrants is our electronic grants management system. It helps us get information in a standardized way so we could use that to navigate things and makes it easier for us and quicker for us to get results back.

15:40:27 It is a technology system and like any technology system, you need to keep things in mind when using it. We have a couple people some current grantees who have had experience with eGrants but here are key tools and tips and recommendations that we have for using it.

15:40:58 First, use a word document. It will be one to save often in the system. Those are very important, you want to do your work in word processing application, any that you prefer and then copy and paste it into eGrants.

15:41:08 EGrants is not a great composition tool and it's better for capturing and passing along information, so please use a word processing system. The help desk can be your friend. There's a hotline for technical issues.

15:41:27 One thing I will mention about the hotline is that if you can access them early, try to reach out to them early, so this goes hand-in-hand with another one to prepare to submit your application well in advance of the deadline.

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15:41:34 The busiest time of the year for the help desk will be 4:25 PM, Eastern, on February 3.

15:42:00 In addition to some of these we have using work plan development worksheets, we talked about this in the last webinar or a couple webinars ago, these are templates you could use to help write out what you are planning on doing to copy and paste into the work plan of eGrants.

15:42:23 Before submitting your application, print it from eGrants if possible. There's a 15 page limit. Make sure that you fall within the page limit and then finally if you have problems, use the National Service hotline. It's important to follow the steps, especially if you think you may fall into the late application category.

15:43:02 In the NOFO, it explains they only accept things if you went to National Service hotline and have a ticket. If you have issues technology wise, use the hotline. When it comes to technical issues, the hotline is where you could go but if you have questions that have to do with programmatic questions, more general questions about the competition, go to the 2021 FGP SCP expansion mailbox.

15:43:03 Debbie will walk us through eGrants.

15:43:17 >> Thank you, now that we got through those tips and tricks, let's go into eGrants. This is the first screen you will see when you enter eGrants.

15:43:32 You will create an account. I will not go into detail on how to create an account but there's instructions about it and tools that was shown to you earlier with the eGrants application instructions.

15:43:36 You need an account before you can move forward.

15:43:50 When you login, you will see this page. This is the system we use to get new applications and also the system where our grants live.

15:44:15 If you are awarded AmeriCorps Seniors FGP SCP application, you could manage to grant many different ways in the system. You will see this information right here. It's not just unique to AmeriCorps Seniors, its use by other AmeriCorps programs.

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15:44:32 Will ask you to select NOFO or NOFA. You will follow the drop down menu and look for FY 2021 FGP or SCP competition and that will get you started.

15:44:39 It will take you to a screen that looks like this.

15:44:54 If you look at the last, this is outline of everything you need to submit. On the left, you have outline of all information that you need to submit for your application.

15:45:09 It will also populate information of the NOFA and it will pull all that account you created. You want to make sure that is correct.

15:45:18 We will circle back at the end of the process to talk about authorization representative.

15:45:42 We will work our way through this off-line. It starts with the narrative. The narrative section has a number of subsections. To learn what I should put in each section, where might I go, where may I find information about AmeriCorps Seniors is looking for in different subsections.

15:46:01 Do you have any guesses? Can you add it to the chatbox? On where you might find that description?

15:46:22 The NOFO is good, yes. Thank you, Wendy. Any other ideas?

15:46:55 Following instruction number two -- I will repeat the question. Where might you find which subsection you need to complete for the application? For the narrative? So far we have the NOFO or NOFA and application instruction.

15:47:23 Those are correct. Those two documents work in tandem. Grant application instructions and the NOFO includes all criteria. You want to use those in combination with each other. Grant application instruction tells you what to put the NOFA says and how we will evaluate it and you want to put that into consideration as you develop on your application.

15:47:59 Many of you and most of you have come a long way in the webinars where we talk about performance measures and how they are important to the application where you will tell us what you will do project specific outputs and

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outcomes targets and tells us how many unduplicated volunteers you are going to need involving in each activity to give us the sense of the scope of your work.

15:48:22 This is structured to building more written. Let's see what it looks like when you enter the work plan section. This is what you will see. It will be blank and you need to click on begin to get started. Once you get started, you will have the opportunity to build things out.

15:48:52 The first thing you will need to do is select objectives and focus areas. Those of you who have attended earlier webinar will remember the focus area is where you must have FGP or SCP activity and within each focus area there are more specific objectives.

15:49:04 What we see like education is the focus area and objective underneath that. This is waterfall menu. When you click on one of the titles, you will see the objectives.

15:49:14 We don't see healthy futures or objective underneath healthy futures because we didn't click on it. If we did, we would see those.

15:49:28 This is a great place to point out how important it is to develop your work plan before you get to eGrants.

15:49:37 I will select all my objectives on the screen. I can come back later and add more if I want to, but this will send me on a path to get the system information it needs.

15:50:00 If I don't click everything I need, it will be complicated to go back.

Couple other things I would like to note is this screenshot for the Foster Grandparent Program, for those of you applying for Senior Companion Program, it looks like this but has healthy futures.

15:50:26 Once I have done that, I can click on next. It will take me to this screen. Now you will see, you will not -- now you will not see anything at the top because it's meant to summarize what you have built. You will start building them down here and then take them one at a time.

15:50:53 Build each work plan one at a time providing the specific information. One of the most common issues that we see at this stage is assuming that the

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size of the text box that you see on the screen indicates how much information we want.

15:51:12 That's not the case. Understand what to put in these fields, you want to look at the grant application instructions. They give you what a complete community need definition is. You want to meet the requirement on the size of the field on the screen has nothing to do with amount of information we want.

15:51:15 You want to develop them beforehand and copy and paste them in using your word document.

15:51:42 What you put -- what you put out in one stage of process will filter through to the next screen. What we have done is we jumped ahead at the screen to simulate what it looks like when you have entered several of these fields.

15:52:05 You build them in the screen providing information here. What you do after this is that you will start to choose output outcomes targets and allocate [indiscernible]. We've had to go through the screen for each of the one of the 4 work plans that you see here.

15:52:20 For this application, we built 4 work plans on the last screen and now we want to add the VSYs. Put these outcome output target. I want to enter my target and I couldn't and it's locked.

15:52:47 Once I changed my project total number from zero to the number of VSYs I am requesting, we can allocate our target so just to repeat -- I wasn't able to enter in my targets because I had zero but once I updated VSYs number two what I am requesting, I was able to enter my target.

15:53:15 We have done that for the example as we put 100 to keep it simple. Now it's time to fill out the rest of the field. Can anyone tell me how you would get the output and outcome target? Where do they come from? Where do you figure out the output and outcome, enter that into the chatbox.

15:53:39 Performance measure worksheet, yes.

15:53:54 Any other tools that we have on the extension page.

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15:54:20 That's a good example of the output and outcomes. Appendix B performance measure offers additional instructions that are helpful for completing.

15:54:39 We start off with the best guess of what we can accomplish the past experiences, research, [indiscernible], expectation, we are looking for here as you are all on the right track.

15:54:54 So this is a projection and you want to do the research that is indicated about what we think we will achieve in the given year.

15:55:18 You will project that during similar work and you could build off of that or you have been working with your station or community partners or advocacy boards, you want to make informed projection of how many people you will serve and in most cases as this is your people target.

15:55:39 How many do you think will experience change in their lives as a result and that is what the outcome target is. Then you get to the unduplicated volunteers. For the purpose of application, think VSYs and when you see unduplicated volunteers, that translates to VSYs.

15:56:08 This has to add up to 100. This also the column when talking about how many VSYs you must put into national performance measures, you can remember -- can anyone remind me of that? You want to divide the amount you are applying for to get the number of VSYs.

15:56:23 That must be programmed into your national performance measures. Anybody remember what that number is?

15:56:33 Wendy, you are on top of it.

15:57:04 That is correct for every 6500 and federal funding requested, you must have at least one unduplicated volunteer in a work plan that results in national performance measures.

15:57:32 We have built the work plans and allocated VSYs and the system gives summary charts and tables. These are for your information only and they are helping you to look at information. They don't tie to any of our requirements.

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15:58:05 When you click on validate performance measure, that will check to make sure that you completed all the information you need to complete this. It will not check to see how many VSYs with the national performance measures and will not you -- will not look for the community section and say it's complete but it will check to make sure that information is complete.

15:58:08 After you validate performance measures, it will make sure everything is okay and then you go back to the full application by clicking the button right there.

15:58:38 You have a section for the required document and notes. This is like a checklist. You will send those to us by email at additional_documents@cncs.gov and there are detailed instructions in the notice of opportunity, NOFO.

15:58:48 They do not update automatically. You have to go back and tell us that you sent. It's like a checklist that you use as you go through instructions to think through what if you provided.

15:59:27 One of the documents, application operations and financial management survey. Or FMS -- it's required if your current grantee or not. Some may completed the OFMS and the OFMS survey or the OFMS is different document than in the past formerly known as the FMS.

15:59:46 The OFMS has taken its place in the form needs to be completed in its entirety. There's response for every question and if there are additional comments needed, to explain your response, use the prepared comments section.

15:59:52 Must be submitted as a word document, all other formats including PDF will not be accepted.

15:59:59 This is the one time that you return it in a Word document and make sure you complete everything.

16:00:18 You get budget section and this is next section of application, the budget section is divided into two screens. To enter information you have to add in new budget item for some of the fields.

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16:00:32 The others you will see they have already been built in. We have been -
- you could click and edit and that's how you enter the budget information.

16:00:42 I recommend you check out yesterday's recording of the best practices
in budget development for more information on completing the budget.

16:01:37 Finally the authorized screen. I mentioned at the beginning that
authorized representative screen is important. This needs to be completed by a
person who is able to legally bind their organization to this contractually. The title
of the person will vary but the key thing is it needs to be the person who has
ability to bind organization legally -- authorized application for the organization.

16:02:04 In many cases, that may not be the person who is completing
application. You are going to have to create a representative and account so they
would need separate account for themselves, people that I work with at that
level, sometimes they need to get it on their schedule and sometimes we have to
help them create those accounts.

16:02:25 I will go back to the FAQs. I have jumped to question for the point
number one and how do I answer -- how do I enter my authorized persons
name? They have to sign in with their own account and they could do that by
creating an account.

16:02:50 I have done this through the grant application instructions showing you
the tool I talked about earlier. You could see the instructions right here. I will do a
quick search with the authorized person information and you could find more
information through the FAQ.

16:02:58 There's more information on how to get that information.

16:03:09 We have some polls.

16:03:26 The first one -- should you submit your application, when should you
submit your application?

16:03:58 You want to do it before the deadline. February 3 is fine, just in case
you had technical difficulties, you could -- you should have it before the deadline,
yes.

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16:04:17 The next one -- the tool that you could use to plan your work plan before entering them into eGrants is called what?

16:04:40 Perfect. Work plan development worksheet. We provide that as word document and PDF so if you are somebody who likes to work in the computer, use the word document to do that.

16:04:58 If you have technical issues, you should do what?

16:05:27 Use the National Service hotline and you could find that information provided in the NOFO. They are a great support and you could call them or email them or use the chat to connect with them. If you have issues, you will get a ticket number that you can record what you are receiving assistance for.

16:06:03 So Erica, you are confused about the account? The point about the two accounts is because if you complete the application but you are not authorized by your organization to submit or say that you authorize to contractually bind the application, then whoever is that person will need an account so they could go in and authorize it when submitting the application.

16:06:25 If you are the person that has authorization and let's say you are the director or somebody of higher level, you may be able to be that person and have one account but what we find is that usually program director will be submitting application and then supervisor above them will have their own account to sign off as representative.

16:06:50 Question to answer --

16:07:14 >> Couple questions that I will go through -- I saw question about matching letter that is in eGrants one of the additional documents, matching letter could be list of sources of matching funds that your organization has.

16:07:49 If you are a current AmeriCorps grantee of another AmeriCorps program so another AmeriCorps Seniors program like RSVP, you are considered first-time applicant for these programs. In the chat I saw a question asking -- let me see if I could find it.

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16:07:57 Essentially asking if you had started an application for both programs and then later decided that you didn't want to have one or the other, could you delete it? Yes, you can remove it.

16:08:32 If you get to the process where you submit them and wish to withdraw application later on in the process, for whatever reason, you may also do that. There's a process that is documented in the NOFA and the FAQs.

16:08:50 Question about indirect cost agreement -- if you currently have a eGrants account and you have indirect cost agreement that has been updated, you can update in the system.

16:09:22 Laura, I see your question about the PPR. Can you give me more context? Do you mean whether or not project director versus authorized rep can submit reports?

16:09:56 Okay so anybody attached -- the question was can anyone submit the reports. Anyone associated with the grant in eGrants can submit the reports.

16:10:37 I saw question but I can't find it anymore and had to do with multiple organizations applying together. Multiple organizations cannot jointly apply for the grant, one organization has to be identified as sponsor organization. If you have a partnering organizations, they may serve as stations so locations where volunteers may serve but only one organization can be the sponsoring organization where AmeriCorps would give the funding.

16:10:55 You can add your questions to the Q&A pod.

16:11:16 I see a question are we allowed to use already on file with CNCS? Are you referring to endocrine -- to indirect cost rate if you have a grant for some documentation or just in general some things you have?

16:11:48 Just in general, so I think I saw a question to this earlier but when you create your account, you will use your organization's EIN and that will link you to your organization within eGrants so whatever is already part of your organization's profile will be brought into the grant application.

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16:12:09 But you still for the purposes of the grant so let's say you have RSVP grants, you would not select continuation. It's still a brand-new project if you are applying to FGP/SCP.

16:12:55 Match for fiscal year 21 has been waived. That was an agency decision or agency level decision. Yesterday during the budget training, and the days before we mentioned that match is being waived. You could still show how you would, how you would accomplish match if possible in your application but just know that match is waived for fiscal year 21 due to CoVid.

16:13:24 I saw a question earlier about one of the outcomes in the Senior Companion Program, H 15 A and that outcome is for legacy programming only

16:14:11 Are we assuming match will be waived for 22 since 21 ends in October? So technically these will start on July 1, 2021 and so for that entire budget period of the grant award July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, match would be waived and that's considered your fiscal year 21 grant.

16:14:44 Are all performance measures required to count output outcome or are only the performance measures acceptable? Only performance measures that are acceptable are output outcome pairings where it becomes counterintuitive in SCP, there's one type of work plan called other community priorities work plan.

16:15:21 That is if you have let's use example from we have requesting 40 VSYs in \$260,000 and let's pretend we are requesting \$260,000 and 45 VSYs, based on our cost per VSY threshold ~1 per 6500, the 40 VSYs would have to go in output outcome pairings and healthy futures for the SCP program but you have extra VSYs in there as well.

16:16:05 The extras can be either placed in another healthy futures work plan or they could be added to the other community priorities work plan in the eGrants. Other community work plans lives under output only for the SCP program. If we could go -- I know that's confusing so let's go to slide number -- slide 21 please.

16:16:43 On here, if you can see we have select category title. For the SCP, if you click on select category title, there's an option that says output only. Other

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community priorities performance measures lives under there. Aside from that, only measures you can choose are the output outcome pairings.

16:17:02 I see the question about indirect cost rate and automatic calculations. I'm not sure of the answer to that. Sorry.

16:17:22 Let me check to see if I am missing anything in the chat.

16:17:31 You can add your questions to the Q&A pod.

16:18:00 Any other questions could be added to the Q&A pod.

16:18:42 Question asks why would you put someone in other community priorities? Let's say there's a couple activities that your volunteers are doing but they can't be measured by the pairings that we have.

16:19:10 Let me pull up Appendix B so I could give an example. The service activities they are doing don't fall under the pairings, under any of these pairings, you could count their services under other community priorities.

16:19:58 One last call for questions. Michael, I could see your question and I'm pulling up the NOFO so I could see what you are referring to.

16:20:51 Michael, to answer your question, you may add it to the narrative. It doesn't hurt to add information to the narrative. If you don't think the budget breakdown shows those plans clearly, I would recommend you add it to the narrative and hopefully that helps.

16:21:48 Example about other training priorities, I see that question, give me a second.

16:22:14 We have a question in the Q&A pod that asks if we could give example of putting volunteers in other community priorities and how we would calculate funding for example 40 VSYS 30 and other community priorities, what with the funding be?

16:22:41 Remember when you request VSYSs, the number of VSYSs you request times \$6500 is the maximum amount of funding you can request so if you were to request 40 VSYSs, maximum amount of funding you could request is \$260,000.

16:23:07 You can request less than that but the one thing you need to be sure of is that for every \$6500 that you request, one VSYS is placed in national

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performance measures workplan that results in education outcome for the Foster Grandparent Program or healthy futures outcome for the Senior Companion Program.

16:23:19 If you were to have 30 VSYs in other community priorities, let me see if we could come up with an example of that.

16:23:45 That would mean 10 VSYs were in outcome based workplan so 10 VSYs times 6500 would be \$65,000.

16:24:25 For indirect cost agreements and indirect cost rates, you could negotiate a rate with cognizant Federal agency or use de minimus rate -- deminimus rate.

16:24:40 Erica, you could send email to 2021 fgpscp@cns.gov.

16:25:25 At this time, your application can only include the counties on Appendix A. I think we got all the questions and in the Q&A pod.

16:25:31 I will do one last call for questions.

16:26:13 All right, we have reached the end of our time together and we have a quick poll to let us know how we did and how you feel after our series together and if there are no other questions, I will stress how excited we are to offer this opportunity.

16:26:25 We hope you will take advantage and I'm excited to see a lot of familiar grantee names and a lot of names I had become familiar, new to AmeriCorps names and we are excited to have your applications come in.

16:26:39 This session has been recorded and we will have it on the website by close of business on Friday and I hope you have a wonderful afternoon, and good luck with your applications.

16:26:55 I will answer the questions that just came in in the Q&A pod and I will answer those in the pod. Goodbye.

16:26:58 >> Thank you

16:27:04 [End of session]

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