

NWX-CNCS

**Moderator: Tamika Becton
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01:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. All participants will be on a listen only mode for the duration of today's conference. During the question and answer session, you may press star 1 if you wish to ask a question.

This conference is also being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. I'll now turn the conference over to Katharine Gregg, Senior Program Manager. Thank you. Please begin.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you. Hello and welcome to the First Technical Assistance call for 2015 Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion Program Indian Tribes Competition.

Today's technical assistance call will focus on a 101 type of review of the Foster Grandparent Program and the Senior Companion Program. I'm joined today by Dr. Erwin Tan, Director of Senior Corps, (Kara Balcerzak), Program Officer for the Minnesota State Office and (Jill Sears), Program Officer for the New Mexico State Office.

Please help me in welcoming Dr. Erwin Tan, who'd like to say a few words to get us started.

Erwin Tan: Katharine, thank you so much, and thank you to everyone who's joining us here today. This is an exciting opportunity. This is the first time in Senior Corps that we know of where we've issued a Notice of Funding Availability specifically for potential tribal applicants.

Senior Corps in particular these two programs the Foster Grandparent Program and the Senior Companion Program has empowered community members who are 55 and older within 200% of the poverty level to serve both children in the communities through the Foster Grandparent Program or other older adults in the Senior Companion Program.

And this model of national service, what we empower the elders in the community, the people we trust to convey the wisdom and the wisdom to our children and trusted in the homes of our other elders. This is what the Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs are all about. So without further delay, I'm going to turn it back over to Katharine and her team to talk about what it entails to be a Senior Companion and a Foster Grandparent grantee.

And again, for this competition only federally recognized tribes are eligible and we are hoping that as many potential applicants apply as - because we're only as good as our grantees. Thank you very much.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you Dr. Tan. So today let's take a look at our agenda for our call. During this call, we want to give you a better understanding of the FGP and SCP programs and how these grant funds are to be used.

We'll review Senior Corps and the two programs including the third program, which isn't part of this competition but just to give you a brief overview, and give some information about the budget, examples of current projects and finally have time at the end to respond to any questions that you may have.

First, a brief overview of the Corporation for National and Community Service otherwise known as or referred to on this call as CNCS. The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities and foster specific engagements through service and volunteering. We accomplish this through our programs Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and the Social Innovation Fund.

Should you wish, you can learn more about these programs by visiting our website at nationalservice.gov. Senior Corps is the nation's largest organization for volunteers age 55 and over. The three Senior Corps programs are RSVP, the Foster Grandparent Program otherwise known as and referred to on this call as FGP and the Senior Companion Program, again otherwise known as and referred to on this call as SCP.

Volunteers with the Foster Grandparent Program tutor or mentor children with special and exceptional needs. Volunteers with the Senior Companion Program assist frail older adults to help them maintain their independence in their homes. Both Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers serve between 15 and 40 hours each week, and those who are eligible receive a small stipend.

RSVP, the third program under the Senior Corps umbrella, is slightly different in that the volunteers in RSVP, we serve in a variety of opportunities with flexible hours and no stipends. We are proud to say that Senior Corps projects

can be found in every state as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Senior Corps volunteers support more than 70,000 non-profit and public agencies across the country. All Senior Corps programs are governed by the CNCS headquarter staff and supported strongly by 47 state offices across the country.

Now let's discuss a brief overview of the FGP Program to help you better understand the program from which these competition funds could be used. FGP is one of the three Senior Corps programs and one of its oldest. Begun in 1965, FGP is one of the nation's oldest and most successful inter-generational programs for volunteers age 55 and over.

In fact, this year FGP is celebrating its 50 anniversary. The volunteers at FGP if financially eligible receive a small hourly stipend. Those organizations and tribes that are awarded funds through this competition become known as FGP sponsored grantees.

It's then the responsibility of the grantee to recruit and place FGP volunteers at organizations throughout the assigned service area as those to manage the overall grant and a service location, which we call volunteer stations, those locations where Foster Grandparents serve. The Foster Grandparent serve in person to person roles through direct services to children assigned to them for assistance.

So what's the FGP Program when you get down to its nuts and bolts? Foster Grandparents are role models, mentors and friends to children with special or exceptional needs or who need extra support to help them succeed in school

and life. This program provides a way for volunteers age 55 and over to stay active by serving children and youth in their community.

Our volunteers serve at thousands of local organizations helping children learn to read and be tutored, mentoring troubled teenagers and young mothers, caring for premature infants or children with disabilities and helping children who have been abused or neglected.

As mentioned previously, Foster Grandparents serve assigned children, children who have been identified as needing additional support and who are then assigned directly to a volunteer. Foster Grandparents are not classroom aides. They are mentors and life coaches and tutors.

FGP volunteer support, Foster Grandparents serve between 15 and 40 hours per week. Foster Grandparents must meet income qualifications which are 200% of the federal poverty level or lower to receive their tax free hourly stipend of \$2.65 per hour. This per hour stipend is applicable only during those hours that volunteers are serving. These stipends are included in your grant application budgets.

FGP program regulations contain additional information and we'll be discussing that a little bit later in this presentation. Most often, Foster Grandparents can be found serving at schools, Head Start centers or after school programs.

Now let's discuss the Senior Companion Program. SCP is another one of the three Senior Corps programs. Begun in 1974, SCP was developed in response to the growing need for extra support for older adults who were streaming in the community and in their homes. It was part of a growing understanding of

the need for independent living services in a society where older adults are living longer than ever before.

Another term for this that you may be familiar with is Aging in Place. Senior Companion volunteers age 55 and over and also if financially eligible could receive a small hourly stipend. Those are organizations that are awarded funds through this competition will become SCP sponsors and grantees and again will also be responsible as in the FGP program to recruit and place SCP volunteers at organizations in client's homes throughout the service area.

Senior Companions serve in a person to person role providing direct services to the clients who are assigned to them for assistance.

What is the SCP program? Senior companions make a difference by providing assistance and friendship to adults who have difficult with daily living tasks such as shopping, paying their bills, getting to doctor's appointments and socializing in their community, helping those adults remain independent in their homes and/or community help to delay costly institutional care, enhances greatly the quality of life for the clients and their caregivers.

Senior Companions give families or professional caregivers a much needed time off from their duties, run errands and often provide friendship for their clients. Senior Companions also serve between 15 to 40 hours per week like their Foster Grandparent counterparts helping an average of two to four adult clients live independently in their own home. Again volunteers will receive a small stipend for the hours of their service.

Volunteers will also receive free service orientation, training for their service and supplemental insurance while on duty and again will qualify for a stipend. Senior Companions just like Foster Grandparents will have to meet the

income qualifications 200% of the federal poverty level or lower, and again the stipend will need to be included in the grant application budget and your regulations can be found at 45CFR part 2551 and we'll be discussing this and how to find these slightly later in the presentation.

So SCP and FGP in your community, if your organization applies and is awarded a grant through the Indian Tribes Competition your organization will be responsible for implementing the SCP or FGP project in the awarded service area.

You'll likely use grant funds to hire an FGP or SCP project director to run the project of your organization. And in your application, you'll have explained the needs in your community and how your volunteer recruitment and placement in the community will make an impact on meeting those community needs.

To talk a little bit in more detail, I'm referring to something called a geographic service area. In Senior Corps, all grants have a scope - a geographic scope or reach that they're responsible for serving within, and we call that the geographic service area. So I just want to clarify because I've been using that term quite a bit in this presentation.

FGP and SCP volunteers are not committed to a certain volunteer schedule until determined with their project director. However, they must volunteer a minimum of 15 hours week and a maximum of 40 hours a week. This flexible scheduling is a strong aspect of our program for volunteer recruitment. Some service activity options for Foster Grandparents might include assisting in classrooms, helping with the GED studying and community based mentoring.

Some service activity options for SCP might include providing companionship, preventing elder abuse and transporting older adults with disabilities. Later in this call, we'll allow for question and answer, if you have questions on other activities that you may have in your - maybe proposing for your application but we do have a wide range of service activities that we encourage all grantees to apply for.

Volunteer benefits are also a strong characteristic of our program. Insurance, accident, personal liability in certain excess of automobile liability is included for volunteers, recognition. Events are encouraged and required for volunteers, meal and transportation reimbursement are included for volunteers as well as the previously discussed hourly stipend.

Volunteer station, this is another Senior Corps specific term that we use. Volunteer stations are those organizations -- or in some instances with SCP - client's homes -- where volunteers serve. Volunteer stations will need to be spread throughout the geographic service area of your FGP or SCP project. They can be non-profit organizations, proprietary health facilities, public agencies or schools.

Those programs whether in FGP or in SCP will formerly work with your volunteer stations under what's called a memorandum of understanding, and their project will assign volunteers to that particular volunteer station in coordination with the volunteer station. Your sponsor organization can also serve as an FGP or SCP volunteer station.

The community served is also involved with your project, again another strong characteristic of the Senior Corps programs. We're very - we're extremely interested in community support and interaction with all Senior Corps projects. We have what's called an advisory council that can be made

up of individuals from your community that are familiar with this need, familiar with its already existing services and also are familiar with your organization and tribe.

And their role and structure is up to you as the grantee, but many advisory councils assist in assessing community needs through work development or long term recognition and are strong attributes for every project and can be a strong support system for your project, especially if you're a new grantee.

So I said that we had a lot of service activity options available to our grantees and to applicants for this competition. However, there are some restrictions on service activities that may be posed. Page 16 of your Notice of Funding Opportunities that you'll find on our website includes a link to federal regulations listing prohibited service activities for these programs.

I did want to cover a few of the more common ones that we find. Among them, FGP or SCP volunteers cannot replace paid staff. What this means is a volunteer cannot - you can't let go a paid staff person and bring in a FGP or SCP volunteer to do the same work plan that the paid staff would've done. Again if there's an open staff position somewhere, an FGP or SCP volunteer can't be brought in to do that work instead of hiring someone new.

Volunteers cannot have - projects can't have volunteer activities that are political in nature, including any services that'll influence service election or voter registration activities. Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion volunteers cannot give religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of hospitalization as part of their volunteer service assignment.

Also a grantee can't use grant funds directly or indirectly to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activities. Again, page 16 of your Notice of Funding Opportunity goes into greater detail about these restrictions.

FGP and SCP budget, now I'm going to tell you that we're going to hold future webinars in the next several weeks that'll go into greater detail about FGP and SCP budgets. This is a really important part of your grant application so we want to give you as much introduction to the complexities of a federal budget as well as the particulars of a Senior Corps budget application process.

This is a really high level overview and like I said, the next several weeks we'll be holding several webinars that'll go in greater detail about what you can expect in putting together and developing your budgets.

Some possible budget items that you can include or the two you should think about including in your budget, funds can be used to hire a full-time director to set up recognition events for your volunteers and to recruit new volunteers. Funds can be used to communicate to volunteers and volunteer stations through newsletters, also to communicate with your community through advertising and newsletters or for the FGP and SCP director to travel to be a volunteer station staff throughout the geographic service area.

Again, geographic service area means that they can be reimbursed for any travel by the project director throughout the area where your project is serving. Funds can also be used for FGP or SCP directors to travel to the corporation, training events or other relevant training opportunities.

Now, the end of all of this is the small print. All grants are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements. What are the Uniform Administrative Requirements? Just this year the Uniform Administrative Requirements were

put into place. In the past, federal grants were governed by a budgeting risk governed by a series of what was called OMB circulars.

These multiple circulars had now been wrapped up into one set of guidance called the Uniform Administrative Requirement. They can be found on the Federal Register website. They're also discussed and described on page 13 of the Notice of Funding Availability for both FGP and SCP.

These contained the OMB cost principles that detail allowable expenses for the budgets. When we do discuss in later webinars the budgets, you'll hear things about allowable and unallowable cost. These Uniform Administrative Requirements go into deep detail as to what's allowed and not allowed in the federal budget.

Non-federal funds, FGP and SCP grants have certain requirements for non-federal funds. In a first year of a grant, a sponsor must have at least 10% of their total project budget come from non-federal funds. This may be either cash or in-kind. This non-federal requirement increases to 20% year two and 30% year three and each year thereafter.

Non-federal share is represented as the grantee share in your budget application. Anything in excess of the required non-federal share can be listed in the excess column of the budget. This is more in the weeds and this will be explained in great detail on a future webinar. But needless to say, the important thing to take away from this slide today is that 10% of your total project budget must come from non-federal funds.

Again it may be cash or in-kind. Any staff time sent on fund raising should also be accounted for outside of the federal fund. It is not an allowable FGP or SCP budget expense.

All right, criminal history checks. This is an allowable list item but it's a very important budget item. We had starting in 2007 leading up to 2013 the federal government has released a series of statutory requirements that pertain to volunteers and staff covered under federal funds.

Criminal history checks are an allowable budget item. Expenses may be for fingerprints or state criminal history checks. But the most important thing to take away is that this website that you see on the slide in front of you, this is extraordinarily important site to visit while you're putting together your application.

This site will walk you through everything you need to know about the requirements that you must go through for your FGP and/or SCP proposed project staff and your proposed volunteer numbers. Fingerprints are required for any staff hired on or after April 21, 2011 that has recurring access to a vulnerable population.

Foster Grandparents and SCP - and Senior Companion Project staff and volunteers are often working directly with what we call vulnerable populations, children and elder adults. This is a requirement of these programs - for these projects.

Many projects may have staff that had been with them prior to these dates so you'll need to review the requirements every set of years from 2007 to 2013, have a different set of requirements. Again, that's why I'm saying it's really important to check out the resources available to you on the nationalservicesresources.gov website. Review the resources and - for full information and requirements. This is - the criminal history checks are non-negotiable and they're the responsible of the applicant and the grantee.

The code of federal regulation, the code of federal regulation is the source of requirements that govern Senior Corps grants. It's the codification of the general and permanent rules published in federal register by the executive departments and agencies in the federal government. Basically that's a fancy way of saying what's not in the statutory law is carried out through what we call regulation.

Every program has one Senior Companions regulation are different than RSVP's regulation, are different than FGP's. If you're considering applying for one of our grants, again I'm encouraging you to please read the CFR for the program for which you're applying to better understand those rules and guidance that govern these programs.

We've also - we put it on this webinar. The easiest way to review the CFR, that'd be by accessing online for the e-CFR which means basically I think electronic CFR. The link is also on page 16 of the FGP and SCP Notices of Funding Availability.

There's an easy question and answer format. If you have a question while you're preparing your application, you can ask the question and you'll then be directed to the answer.

So this is drawing us to the end of our overview of FGP and SCP programs. Just a reminder that the exciting due date for these applications is Thursday, May 14, no later than 5:00 pm Eastern Time. A little bit later in this month, we'll start doing webinars on the actual system, what we call the eGrants system, application system and walking you through how to get those grants into - grant application into the system.

It's not the easiest system, so even though the date is May 14 I'd suggest having - giving yourself a good amount of time to get those applications in, and we're so excited and hopeful that you'll bring those in to us.

So I want to go to the last slide which is more information. We're going to have a Q&A session next with you, but I want to make sure you pocket down these very important pieces of communication information.

If you want more information on our programs, Senior Corps.gov, and also most importantly if you have questions, please send them to FGPSCP@cns.gov and we're going to start posting an FAQ, a frequently asked questions document, on our website. And you can find your question that'll hopefully be answered to your kind of fashion on the FAQ.

And we understand because of the exciting nature of this competition, that some folks out there, this may be your first interaction with us as a Corporation, and you may have some very important questions that'll help you get started and also help you complete your application for the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Program. So we want to encourage you so please use that email address to let us know what your questions are.

In the meantime, you have some wonderful opportunities to speak directly to us on this call. (Kara) and (Jill) are going to join me for answering any questions that you may have about this competition, the Corporation, the programs that Senior Corps oversees and keep in mind that we do have a full schedule of future webinars that we'll go into much greater detail on the different aspects of your grant application process.

So (Gabrielle) if you wouldn't mind, I think we're ready for Q&A.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time if you wish to ask a question, please un-mute your phone, press star 1 and record your name when prompted. Again ask star 1 to ask a question and questions will take one moment to queue up. Please stand by. We have one question currently. One moment. All right. Our first question will come from (Kris Norway Flores). Your line is open.

(Kris Flores): Hello. Thank you so much for this webinar. It was really informative, and we're currently a non-profit reading partner thinking about partnering with an Indian tribe. So they may be on the call as well, but we had a couple of questions and please let me know if any of these questions are going to be addressed in future webinars and I'll wait for those.

But I was wondering we have AmeriCorps programs as well, and I'm wondering if it works the same way in the sense that if we ask for a certain grant amount for one year, does that grant amount carryover a three year grant cycle?

Katharine Gregg: Okay I'm going to take that first question. Whatever your application - you apply for in year one will likely be your year two/year three funding as well.

(Kris Flores): Great. And then is it a re-compete every three years?

Katharine Gregg: No, it's renewal. We have what's called - it's called a continuation process.

(Kris Flores): Okay.

Katharine Gregg: So long as you're - stay within the federal grant requirements you're likely to be continued.

(Kris Flores): Fantastic. And then can you repeat what the match was over year two and year three?

Katharine Gregg: Twenty percent and 30%.

(Kris Flores): Thank you. And then with tribes, are the students that are served, must they be native students and should the Foster Grandparent members, do they need to be cardholding tribe members as well?

Katharine Gregg: That's an extremely good question and I'd like to answer that in the FAQs if I could.

(Kris Flores): Yes, sure. Thank you.

Katharine Gregg: Okay. We'll post that by the end of the week.

(Kris Flores): Sounds good. And then is it a requirement to have a full-time Foster Grandparents director or highly recommended?

Katharine Gregg: It's highly recommended especially for a first time grantee, but we do have - you can apply with it part-time and have a justification, and that'll be taken into consideration in the application process.

(Kris Flores): Great. Thank you. And then with a deadline of May 14, when would we expect to hear back if the grant was awarded or not?

Katharine Gregg: I don't have a definitive answer for you on that because we operate in quarters. It'd be likely be before October 1. We start our grants on the quarter.

((Crosstalk))

(Kris Flores): Sorry.

Katharine Gregg: No worries. (Kara) and (Jill) do you want to add anything? Okay.

(Kara Balcerzak): Hello. This is (Kara) from the Minnesota State Office. I want to add something that's necessary to that specific question. I just wanted to point out too that around what the Foster Grandparent volunteers can do, Katharine mentioned tutoring and mentoring and it all goes towards the goal of improved academic engagement or educational outcome.

I just want to mention too that in Native American communities, we know there's data to support that bringing culture to the classroom also contributes improved educational outcomes. So cultural activities like language federation or other culture activities can also be a part of what Foster Grandparents do in native communities. I just wanted to add that.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you (Kara). That's an extremely important addition to the conversation. Okay any further questions?

Coordinator: This is (Gabrielle). We have two other questions in queue. Our first question will come from (Ron). Your line is open.

(Ron): Hello. Can you hear me?

Katharine Gregg: Yes.

(Ron): Okay. I want to check on the maximum funding amount. I didn't quite understand in the instructions on your website how the funding is handled.

Katharine Gregg: Okay. (Kara) or (Jill) would you like to answer that or do I do? Okay hang on just a second. I'll answer. So the - I'm pulling up the relevant part of the NOFA as we speak. Sorry, give me a second.

(Ron): Sure.

(Jill Sears): Katharine this is (Jill). I'll speak broadly while you're pulling that up.

Katharine Gregg: Great. Okay thanks (Jill).

(Jill Sears): So in general in the budget, you're going to look at two different concepts. One are the volunteer service years so how much you're going to spend in terms of budgeting for the volunteer stipends themselves. The other number that you'll look at is an overall budget.

So when you're formulating the budget you really have to think about those two components together. And when you're making the budget, the system itself will help guide you through that process in the sense that it'll - you'll choose a target number of volunteer service years that you want to program and the budget will calculate that out for you based on our algorithm or our formulation.

So that being said, in the NOFA itself I believe it gives a suggested number of VSYs and suggested total amount. Is that what your question is about?

(Ron): Yes. It said something - an example, \$4000-something for a volunteer service an hour or year was it?

Katharine Gregg: Right. So it's - what (Jill) was referring to is on page 4 of the application and it says that grant applications should contain a minimum of 60 VSYs which

are the volunteer service years that (Jill) was discussing just a moment ago at a rate of \$4,550 per VSY so 60 times 4550.

(Ron): Okay. That's exactly what I wanted to make sure I understood. Okay. My next question is for matching, did you say federal funds - other federal funds can't be used as match?

Katharine Gregg: No. Non-federal funds should be used for match.

(Ron): So federal funds can't be used as match. Is that correct?

Katharine Gregg: That is correct, right (Jill) and (Kara)?

Woman: That's correct.

(Ron): Okay. So if anybody is funded from BIA, we can't use 5% of their salary or if the office is funded by BIA, we can't use 5% of the rent total as a match. Is that correct?

Katharine Gregg: I'm going to do the same - ask you the same latitude here to get back to you. We'll have FAQs on that by the end of this week. These are - I don't want to speak for some of our financial folks and so I just want to make sure I correctly identify the response for you.

(Jill Sears): I think that's a great idea Katharine just to support that.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you (Jill).

(Ron): Okay.

Katharine Gregg: So please check back on our website, and we'll send out again the FAQ link as well just so you know that your answer is up there.

(Ron): Okay. Just as a caveat, some applications that are funding agencies allow BIA funds as federal funds to be used. Okay. My last question is you said funds can't be used for religious education. Are tribal cultural or traditional religions exempt from that?

Katharine Gregg: I believe that that would fall under what (Kara) was saying earlier, that we do encourage under this competition the maintaining and improvement of cultural activities and identities along the tribe.

(Ron): Okay one last question. Are tribal resolutions required to be attached to the grant?

Katharine Gregg: I don't know. That's a good one. I'll have to get back to you on FAQs on that if you don't mind.

(Ron): Okay. Well that's it for me. I appreciate the time and your assistance.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you. These are great questions and I'm going to share - we're going to share all of them with the FAQs because for others we'll have the same question, and thank you (Jill) also for your assistance. (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: As a reminder, that's star 1 for questions. Our next question comes from (Danny). Your line's open.

(Danny): Hello there, good afternoon. So my question is you guys are saying that there's a service area for the FGP and SCP programs. So how is the service

area defined? Would that be the sponsor's responsibility or are you guys going to be defining the service area?

Katharine Gregg: You as the applicant will define it in your proposed grant proposal.

(Danny): All right. As for my second question - that was all I had actually. The other question got answered so thank you so much.

Katharine Gregg: Thank you.

Coordinator: And I'm showing no further questions at this time.

Katharine Gregg: Okay. We'll give folks - if something pops into range, we'll give you a second to ask a question. In the meantime (Jill) and (Kara), again anything I missed or you feel we should cover?

(Jill Sears): This is (Jill). I just think that we've - I think you covered everything in a broad overview. What I'd like to say is that these are some great questions that are coming out, and we're I think very excited to hear that you're giving this a lot of thought. And we'll reiterate that please check the FAQs for the answers because you're asking some really detailed questions and that's fantastic.

Katharine Gregg: Thanks (Jill). That was great. Any questions (Gabrielle)?

Coordinator: I'm showing no questions.

Katharine Gregg: Okay. And as you know folks, FGPSCP@cns.gov. Please feel free to send those questions later on if you think of something. We'll also be posting the

replay number for this call on our website. So if you want to look into it again and you generate some more questions, please feel free to send them to us.

We really thank you so much for joining us today and I want to thank my colleagues (Kara) and (Jill) for their tremendous contribution behind the scenes and on this call to this competition. We're all very excited here at the Corporation, and we look forward to seeing your applications and seeing you on our future calls. Thank you and have a great day.

Coordinator: That will conclude today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect your line at this time.

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