

SUMMARY REVIEWER COMMENTS

2013 RSVP Competition

Legal Applicant: Region 8 Planning and Development Council

Applicant ID: 13SR144104

Project Name: Region Eight Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from only the external reviewer on the blended panel. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

External Reviewer's Summary Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant adequately addressed the needs in the proposed service area. They provided demographic information on the population and documented unemployment and economic challenges that have created difficult conditions related to transportation and food security. This information represents evidence of need in their Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures.

The applicant clearly identified multiple methods that would be used to train volunteers. The applicant will provide RSVP volunteer orientation, training specific to their assignment and opportunities to participate in relevant state training, such as the disaster preparedness training through the American Red Cross.

In the work plan, the applicant provides information on how data will be collected and reported to ensure measurement of National Performance Measures. There is reference to the instruments to be used and in some cases the intervals of data collection and reporting protocols.

The applicant provides specific information on match support in the narrative. The amount of in-kind to be provided by 24 volunteers stations, banks and professionals, media groups, community groups and grants.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provides information on serving veterans by including them in the list of those who would benefit from RSVP volunteer activities in the community. However, it was not clear how services would be specific to veterans. For instance, there was information on supporting education and training through a computer lab to assist with job searches and resume writing, but the applicant did not clearly discuss addressing the special needs and issues of veterans.

The applicant lacked specific information on key elements of RSVP related program regulations and volunteer benefits. For instance, in the narrative, background checks, provision of meals for volunteers and volunteer travel reimbursement were not discussed. The cost of transportation was cited as a community challenge, but the applicant did not specifically address volunteer reimbursements for travel.

The applicant did not provide explicit information on graduating volunteer stations. The element of the selection criteria was not addressed. It is unclear if there is a need to graduate stations.

It is unclear how unduplicated volunteers were determined in the work plan and it appears total volunteer numbers based on projections in the narrative may have been underreported.