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Executive Summary

The Maryland Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV) requests \$264,000 for the Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund. Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund will begin on September 30, 2014 and it will provide sub-grants to a diverse group of local volunteer connector organizations. For the FY2014 VGF grant period, the GOSV will operate a competitive application process for volunteer connector organizations to use the funds to increase the number of citizens who volunteer and the number of volunteer hours served each year, additionally, the funds will support a Mini Grant Program to fund state-wide service projects. This request builds on the successful implementation of Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund in the 2010-2012 and 2014 grant periods.

Program Design

A. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund (MD VGF) continues to maintain our three key goals: (1) strategically invest in community-based and highly effective volunteer centers so that they can best respond to local priorities; (2) increase the number of MD citizens, overall, who volunteer each year; and (3) increase the number of volunteers who are under 18, professionals who serve as skill-based volunteers, and veterans. These goals align with the national goals of the Volunteer Generation Fund, the priorities of MD Governor Martin O'Malley, and the strategies included in the MD State Service Plan (completed in November 2012).

In an effort to better meet the needs for the recruitment and management of skill-based volunteers and veterans in Fiscal Year 2014, MD VGF plans to expand its eligible sub-grantee pool by making funds available to volunteer connector organizations beyond the core volunteer centers operating in Maryland. Sub-grants will continue to be made available to MD VGF's current cohort of four volunteer centers, all of which are interested in continued partnership, other volunteer centers state-wide, in addition to nonprofit organizations or state agencies that are serving as a volunteer connector agency for STEM volunteers. The MD VGF will provide sub-grants up to \$25,000 to successful and established volunteer programs that recruit, manage, and/or match volunteers to serve Maryland communities in need. Organizations that recruit and/or manage skill-based volunteers to support STEM programs will be invited to apply alongside Maryland volunteer centers. We expect to be able to increase the size of our sub-grantee cohort and build a community of learning for well-established organizations to serve as models and mentors for developing organizations.

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Additionally, the MD VGF will continue to leverage \$25,000 of the funds to offer the VGF Mini Grant Program to nonprofit organizations and state and local government agencies to bolster the impact and profile of service projects across Maryland. This program is designed to support the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance and Day to Serve -- an annual regional service initiative in September created in partnership between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 'the governors of Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia,' and the mayor of the District of Columbia. In 2013, in Maryland alone, over 20,000 volunteers contributed 60,000 volunteer hours, collected 350,000 pounds of food, filled 1,671 bags with trash and debris, and planted 1,500 trees. Day to Serve focus areas align closely with CNCS focus areas of Healthy Futures and Environmental Stewardship. An aim of the State of Maryland's participation in this initiative is to surpass the service measures accomplished in 2013; the GOSV's financial contribution provided to its grantees will make this a possibility. Impact goals for Maryland's participation in Day to Serve 2015 will be informed in part by the accomplishments of 2014 VGF Mini Grant grantees as reported in October 2014.

For both pillars of the MD VGF FY2014, funds will support the grantees' service projects, volunteer recruitment and tracking activities, and technology and infrastructure. Based on results in the first four years, it is expected that the VGF sub-grantees will leverage at least 26,000 volunteers to serve 66,000 hours; of which 20% of volunteers will be skill-based professionals and approximately 3% will be veterans. These projections are based on MD's VGF cumulative results as of March 31, 2014. It is also expected that the FY2014 VGF sub-grants will allow the MD volunteer centers to continue to expand their specialized volunteer mobilization activities as well as increase volunteerism overall in the State. Examples of specialized activities include: expanding opportunities for professionals and skill-based volunteers in Montgomery County and Baltimore City; providing disaster preparation and recovery assistance in Howard, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's counties; and concerted state-wide efforts to reach out to and engage the veteran population in service. With the existing sub-grantees' accomplishments to date in these areas, the GOSV has a high level of confidence that the sub-grantees will be able to effectively recruit these types of volunteers in the years ahead.

B. MEASUREMENT

The GOSV will use a combination of process and outcome evaluation to measure the impact of the MD VGF. Process data will be collected through staff observation and analysis of sub-grantee

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performance and sub-grantee reporting throughout the grant year. These activities will be consistent with current AmeriCorps grantee evaluation and monitoring activities performed by GOSV staff; they will include monitoring site visits to assess implementation successes and challenges, feedback on written reports, extensive individual coaching, and cross-agency collaboration. GOSV staff will also share common challenges and lessons learned from the VGF among the project sub-grantees and throughout the volunteerism community in MD via project outcome reports published on the GOSV website. Outcome data on volunteer recruitment and management, volunteer hours, youth volunteers, skill-based volunteers, veteran volunteers, and the implementation of effective volunteer management practices will be reported each quarter by the sub-grantees and then analyzed by the GOSV.

Volunteer connector sub-grantees will be required to submit quarterly statistical and narrative progress reports to track their activities and results during the grant period. In broad strokes, the volunteer connector organizations will report on volunteers and volunteer activities as well as their own internal capacity-building activities. The GOSV staff will incorporate sub-grantee reporting and staff monitoring results in the required VGF status reports to CNCS. Sub-grantees participating in the Mini Grant Program will be required to submit a single narrative and financial report at the completion of their service projects.

C. CNCS FOCUS AREAS

The MD VGF addresses the third CNCS strategic goal and the capacity building focus area. The VGF funds will support the sub-grant management at the GOSV and enable the sub-grantees, all of which will be community-based volunteer connector organizations, to strengthen their internal volunteer recruitment and tracking systems and engage in targeted outreach to youth, skill-based professionals, and veterans across MD.

D. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Maryland's VGF sub-grantees will produce results in the following national performance measures: (1) number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations and hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited by CNCS-supported organizations; (2) number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations and hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations; and (3)

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number of organizations implementing three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity-building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants.

One additional complimentary measure will also be collected, (4) number of organizations that received capacity building services from CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants, in addition to the continued collection of demographic information about the population of volunteers engaged in service and the populations benefiting from service.

In order to ensure accurate and consistent measurement of the number of organizations implementing three or more effective volunteer management practices as a results of the capacity-building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations, all sub-grantees will be required to use an organizational capacity assessment tool, either approved by, or provided and developed by the commission (guided by CNCS Resource Center resources). The MD VGF will also target and report on the recruitment and management by VGF sub-grantees of youth, professionals engaged as skill-based volunteers, and veterans during the grant period. The GOSV will consult with an AmeriCorps State sub-grantee currently receiving competitive funding from CNCS, Volunteer Maryland, on best practices for effective volunteer management and data collection for this measure, G3-3.3.

E. NEED AND APPROACH

The Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund plans to increase the volunteer generation efforts state-wide by providing financial and programmatic support to volunteer connector organizations engaging youth, older adults, veterans, and skill-based volunteers across the State. The GOSV will implement a three-pronged approach for the FY2014 funding year. (1) The MD VGF will continue to support MD volunteer centers, including those that have already received VGF funding and new sub-grantees that have not received funds through our office previously. (2) Increased efforts will be placed on encouraging and supporting sub-grantees to engage skill-based volunteers, specifically STEM volunteers. (3) Additionally, the MD VGF will implement the Volunteer Generation Fund Mini Grant Program for the second time to support Maryland nonprofit organizations and/or state and local agencies to implement service projects in honor of the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance and/or Day to Serve.

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(1) INCREASE SUPPORT FOR MARYLAND VOLUNTEER CENTERS

The MD volunteer center network plays a key role in supporting effective and long-lasting community service across the State. With six active centers and six in the early stages of organizational development, MD has a local volunteer center in every region of the State and these centers reflect the diversity of MD's community needs and volunteers. The centers manage programs that serve or engage young people, help veterans find meaningful volunteer opportunities, mobilize volunteers to help protect the Chesapeake Bay, and respond to disasters. The centers also provide volunteer management training to their nonprofit partners and recruit and manage skill-based volunteers in leadership roles.

The GOSV intends to make funding available to volunteer centers that have not previously received funding through MD VGF by conducting targeted outreach, providing increased technical assistance for the sub-grant application process, and encouraging collaboration and partnership with previous grantees and other nonprofit partners, such as local United Way chapters. Interest has been expressed by centers in Washington, Baltimore, Cecil, Worcester, and Frederick counties in addition to the volunteer center serving Dorchester, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Kent, and Talbot counties. Funds to support the capacity building of centers like these will address the critical elements that impact volunteer recruitment and retention: making a variety of volunteer opportunities available, the effectiveness of nonprofit staff at asking people to volunteer directly, and the effectiveness of nonprofit staff at managing volunteers effectively once they are recruited.

The GOSV's plan to boost effective volunteer management practices in Maryland will target skill-based volunteers and veterans as a means to increase volunteer impact, build capacity amongst nonprofit organizations, and align with the Governor's priority areas. Engaging skill-based volunteers as a cost-effective means to meet increasing nonprofit needs is a well-supported strategy. According to the Nonprofit Finance Fund's 2014 State of the Nonprofit Sector Survey, 56% of organizations were unable to meet demand for services in 2013 - the highest reported in the survey's history. Many organizations are looking to diversify funding streams, develop new partnerships, and strengthen their volunteer bases to meet these community needs. In a 2008 study conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service entitled "Capitalizing on Volunteers' Skills: Volunteering by Occupation in America," a positive correlation was found between volunteer retention and volunteers' use of professional skills. Volunteers engaged in work that is meaningful for them personally and

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professionally, in addition to being supportive of the organization they serve, are more likely to continue serving.

Training, technical assistance, and collaboration on effective volunteer management practices is needed in order to ensure nonprofit organizations in Maryland are well-poised to effectively recruit and manage the volunteers needed to achieve their missions. According to the 2009 report, Reimagining Service: National Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT) Dataset, "Positive Deviants' in Volunteerism and Service," only 21% of organizations surveyed were effective in recruiting volunteers, and only 6% effectively balanced the use of their volunteers' skills. Although the overall volunteer rate in Maryland increased slightly from 28.3% in 2011 to 28.5% in 2012, according to CNCS's Volunteering and Civic Engagement in Maryland reports, much work is left to be done.

The State of Maryland is uniquely positioned to support VGF, especially given the GOSV's targeted approach for volunteer engagement. The 2008--2012 American Community Survey notes that 43.8% of Maryland citizens work in management, business, science, and arts occupations as compared with a national average in this area of 35.9%. Of Marylanders over the age of 25, 16.4% have attained graduate or professional degrees as compared with the national rate of 10.6%. As of September 30, 2013 the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reports a total of 443,000 veterans living in Maryland (about 9% of the population), most of whom are concentrated in central MD. This large population of highly educated, skilled professionals and veterans can produce enormous value for Maryland's nonprofit sector if leveraged effectively as volunteers.

Additionally, Maryland's veteran unemployment rate in 2013 was measured at 5.9%, according to StateStat MD, 2014. Increased access to engaging and meaningful volunteer opportunities will likely improve Maryland veterans' odds of finding employment, according to the CNCS 2013 study "Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment: Does Volunteering Increase Odds of Finding a Job for the Out of Work?" The finding that people who volunteer have a 27% better chance of finding employment, coupled with MD VGF's goals for outreach to veterans will contribute to Governor Martin O'Malley's goal to reduce the Maryland veterans unemployment rate to 3% by 2015.

Volunteer centers address these issues by training nonprofit staff, recruiting and tracking all types of volunteers and volunteer services, and sharing information and resources throughout their local

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nonprofit networks. In the first three years of MD's VGF, the investment in the local volunteer centers yielded significant returns. For every VGF dollar invested in the volunteer centers, \$3 in volunteer service were provided to seniors, homeless individuals and families, and youth in MD communities.

(2) SUPPORT VOLUNTEER CONNECTOR ORGANIZATIONS WITH PRIORITY GIVEN TO STEM PROGRAMS

The GOSV has recognized a need to increase support for sub-grantees to engage skill-based volunteers. Targeted volunteer recruitment to attract veterans, retired professionals, and skill-based volunteers required an increased focus on the sub-grantees' part, staff training, and resources. Since launching the MD VGF in 2010 great gains have been made by our sub-grantees. Multiple GOSV sub-grantees have received recognition for their innovative programming. The Volunteer Center Serving Howard County's Spotlight on Veterans and Military Families Fair was recognized by HandsOn Network and Points of Light for innovative programming; Business Volunteers Maryland's program for engaging skill-based professionals in Baltimore City public schools and nonprofit organizations was featured in America's Service Commissions' 2014 edition of "Transforming Communities through Service: A Collection of the Most Innovative AmeriCorps State and Volunteer Generation Fund Programs in the United States;" and The Volunteer Center for Anne Arundel County's has been recognized for their continued commitment to the Citizen Corps Council, 'planning, recruiting volunteers for drills and trainings,' and post-Hurricane Sandy and Oklahoma tornado outreach.

It is to the advantage of the State of Maryland to increase the MD VGF's eligible sub-grantee pool to include volunteer connector organizations beyond the core volunteer centers operating in the State. By allowing new sub-grantees to learn from and expand upon successful practices demonstrated by the current grantee cohort, the GOSV will not only increase impact, but also increase visibility and reach for both the GOSV and CNCS. The GOSV intends to select sub-grantees that have not previously received VGF funds from the GOSV and will create a community of learning amongst these sub-grantees.

Volunteer connector organizations that engage skill-based volunteers to support STEM programs will be considered. Not only are STEM programs a funding priority for CNCS, Maryland's Governor Martin O'Malley has included a goal to develop the future STEM workforce and increase the number of STEM college graduates in Maryland as one of his sixteen strategic policy goals. In September

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2008, Governor O'Malley created the Governor's STEM Task Force, which made the recommendations that guided this strategic policy goal in their 2009 final report, "Investing in STEM to Secure Maryland's Future."

This report demonstrates that a STEM education is critical to ensuring that students can compete for and obtain jobs in Maryland where there is a growing demand for skilled workers to fill federal research laboratories and cyber-security jobs. As the demand for educational programs to support Maryland students' engagement in STEM activities increases, so too does the need for skill-based volunteers from the corporate and higher educational sectors. These volunteers fill vital roles participating in activities such as judging robotics competitions, coaching LEGO league teams, leading STEM career discussions in classrooms, and mentoring students, both in-person and virtually, as they learn about anything from using microscopes to computer programming.

Based on findings featured in the 2013 article "Employer Engagement in British Secondary Education: Wage Earning Outcomes Experienced by Young Adults" in the Journal of Education and Work, with each school-mediated contact with a skill-based professional, a student's salaried earning potential increases by 4.5%. This study finds that the social network development opportunities afforded by skill-based volunteer contact are the strongest causal links for this increased wage outcome.

Furthermore, interest in expanding the capacity of STEM-based programs and nonprofit organizations via volunteer support has received tremendous support from Maryland-based employers, local foundations, the Maryland Out of School Time Network, and even the White House. Maryland's own Digital Harbor Foundation Tech Center in Baltimore was recognized by President Barack Obama at the first White House Maker Faire in June 2014. CNCS's recent announcement of the expansion of STEM AmeriCorps Maker Education Initiative into Baltimore is another testament to Maryland's uniquely fertile ground for the growth of this initiative. The GOSV is well-poised to meet the President's call to action to spark creativity in our youth and encourage invention and innovation with the support of skill-based volunteers to build capacity for STEM programs.

(3) MINI GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT STATE-WIDE SERVICE PROJECTS

This program is designed to support the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance and Day to Serve. As Day to Serve focus areas of "Feeding the Hungry" and "Healing the Planet" align closely

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with CNCS focus areas of Healthy Futures and Environmental Stewardship, the GOSV sees this initiative as a opportunity to expand outreach efforts and increase awareness for CNCS' support for the expansion of effective and impactful service across the State of Maryland. By promotion through the Governor's Grant Office, the Day to Serve Steering Committee, the Maryland Volunteer Center Association, current VGF and AmeriCorps State grantees, and Maryland Nonprofits, the GOSV anticipates a large and competitive applicant pool. Additionally, technical assistance via pre-recorded webinars and phone consultations are available to prospective applicants. The Volunteer Generation Fund Mini Grant Program operated in 2014 received funding requests in the amount of \$67,191, nearly three times as much as the funds available for award.

Initially designed as a weekend of service, the Day to Serve initiative was expanded to include 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance in response to requests and inquiries from nonprofit agencies interested in participating in the initiative. Now occurring between September 11 and September 28, Day to Serve engages volunteers across multiple faith-based communities, public and private sectors, and citizens in three states and the District of Columbia. An aim of the State of Maryland's participation in this initiative is to surpass the service measures accomplished in 2013, and the GOSV's financial contribution and technical assistance provided to its grantees will make this a possibility. Impact goals for Maryland's participation in Day to Serve 2015 will be informed by the accomplishments of 2014 VGF Mini Grant grantees as reported in October 2014.

In the case that the GOSV's competitive MD VGF application process does not yield applications that warrant the award of all eight sub-grants for volunteer connector agencies in full (\$25,000), funds may be reassigned to the Mini Grant Program. This contingency plan to increase the Mini Grant Program fund, as needed, will afford the GOSV the opportunity to expand its reach to support additional National Days of Service, such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, and additional nonprofit organizations.

The GOSV provides volunteer recognition opportunities to agencies across the State of Maryland throughout the year such as the Governor's Service Awards, Volunteer Appreciation Day at the Maryland State Fair, Volunteer Certificates, and the Honor Rows program, - a program that recognizes youth in partnership with M&T Bank and The Ravens. Through the GOSV's efforts to recognize the 1.37 million volunteers in Maryland 38,000 citizens were honored by recognition

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activities. Online marketing and social media play a vital role in outreach efforts; in 2013 the GOSV reached and engaged an audience of 567,000 through Twitter and projects to reach 734,000 in 2014. 8,579 active contacts (as of June 17, 2014) receive email blasts regarding volunteer recognition and grant opportunities. The Mini Grant program affords an additional unique opportunity for the GOSV to provide resources to organizations outside the AmeriCorps State and VGF portfolio. The Mini Grant Program, while a relatively small financial investment, leaves a strong impression state-wide of the value of the GOSV and CNCS in celebrating and expanding service opportunities in Maryland.

F. MARYLAND PLAN AND TIMELINE

Maryland will build on the sound sub-grantee management structure currently in place and the high level of service delivery and performance among the existing sub-grantee cohort to fully accomplish the VGF goals in the next grant year. In anticipation of the VGF renewal funding opportunity, in July the GOSV will create a renewal application for the existing cohort of four sub-grantees and an application and outreach plan for new volunteer center and volunteer connector organization applicants. Pending the receipt of VGF funding from CNCS, the existing cohort and new applicants will submit applications and budgets by September 1, 2014. At that time, the GOSV will also conduct the national service criminal history checks on all CNCS-supported personnel (both GOSV and sub-grantees). The GOSV will then review, clarify, and award the sub-grants no later than September 15. Sub-grantees will be selected based on the quality of their applications, the alignment with national and MD VGF goals, and prior years' results. Based on sub-grantee performance to date and the strength of new applicant applications, the FY2014 MD VGF budget assumes that eight sub-grants of \$25,000 will be awarded. All applicants, new and renewal, will be made aware that MD VGF funding is not guaranteed, and the GOSV will conduct a rigorous renewal application process to ensure that all FY2014 VGF goals will be met. Applicants will request funding to sustain or expand their internal management systems and their successful initiatives under the MD VGF.

After the sub-grants are awarded, the GOSV will hold eight training and resource sharing events for the MD VGF sub-grantees. Four of the events will be conducted via webinar; the webinars will be held in December, March, June, and September. Four events will occur at in-person trainings (in a central Maryland location); these will be held in October, January, April, and July. Training topics will include grantee orientation and VGF requirements, prohibited activities, fiscal compliance, national

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service criminal history checks, the GOSV's monitoring plan, data collection and reporting, storytelling, volunteer recruitment (with an emphasis on veterans and skill-based volunteers), and expanding national days of service. These topics reflect a combination of FY2014 VGF goals, the GOSV's assessment of sub-grantee needs (based on prior performance), and requests for training and technical assistance from the sub-grantees themselves. In addition, the GOSV will conduct two in-person site visits with each sub-grantee during the grant year.

The site visits will occur in January 2015 and June 2015; they will be conducted by the GOSV Director and the GOSV Program Officer. The site visit agendas will include reviews of evaluation data and financial records and discussions of VGF successes, challenges, and resources needed. The timeline for accomplishing the volunteer mobilization goals of the MD VGF will vary by sub-grantee. The progress towards the approved performance measures and overall project development will be reported in the sub-grantees' quarterly reports and monitored closely by GOSV staff.

G. CASE FOR SUPPORT

The four volunteer center sub-grantees are currently receiving MD VGF funds totaling \$119,000 are located in Baltimore City, and in Howard, Anne Arundel, and Montgomery Counties. As of March 31, 2014, all sub-grantees are on track to accomplish 100% of the MD VGF goals for the 2014 grant period. This cohort has successfully recruited 5,449 volunteers who have served 13,024 hours and managed 3,870 volunteers who have served 8,222 hours. While the number of funded volunteer centers has decreased to four from six since the 2012 grant year as a result of shifting organizational goals and capacity, this cohort will likely exceed its targets of 8,725 recruited volunteers serving 18,670 hours and 4,880 managed volunteers serving 12,020 hours.

In the first year of the MD VGF, 2010, volunteer center sub-grantees engaged 6,347 new volunteers in 3,887 hours of service. This represented a 248% increase in the number of new volunteers and 884% increase in volunteer hours. By GOSV's third year managing the MD VGF, 2012, sub-grantees mobilized 46,822 volunteers who served 87,251 hours. Of these, 22,088 were identified as new volunteers. Additionally, sub-grantees expanded their technological capabilities to recruit and manage volunteers effectively, completed needs assessments and strategic plans, and established 2,088 business, faith, and nonprofit partnerships. The strong foundations established by sub-grantees and their significant levels of success to date ensure they will fully accomplish all 2014 goals and lay the

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groundwork to increase the MD VGF impact with additional partners. The MD VGF accomplished 100% of its goals for the first three years of the grant period (2010-2012) and is on track to continue this perfect record of performance during the current funding year.

MD VGF funds have been vital to the success of volunteer centers across the State of Maryland, especially in helping to meet strategic growth goals. The ShoreCAN Volunteer Center, a MD VGF sub-grantee between 2010-2012 located in Southern Maryland serving the residents and nonprofit organizations in the Eastern Shore area, made significant strides in program development and community impact as a result of the GOSV's support. As a result of their organizational capacity building accomplishments, their achievement of sustainable growth for their Volunteer Academy and their completion of a 2014-2017 strategic plan, GOSV funding was not required in 2014.

Organizational Capability

The GOSV created a strong base of management in the first four years of the MD VGF. Key accomplishments since the initiative was launched on October 1, 2010 include: establishing project supervision and financial systems, designing and completing the sub-grant application process, designing and implementing the sub-grantee monitoring and training plans, and refining the implementation of MD's VGF each year. The GOSV tailored the monitoring and training plans to best meet sub-grantees' needs.

In 2010-2011, the GOSV provided group trainings on these topics, provided templates and samples of required reports, convened conference calls and webinars to further develop these skills, and provided extensive individual coaching to each sub-grantee through written feedback on progress reports, phone consultation, and in-person meetings. The GOSV also provided regular resources and updates to the sub-grantees via bi-weekly group emails. In 2011, the VGF Coordinator worked with the GOSV's Outreach Coordinator to design and launch a download center on the GOSV's website; the download center includes the grant provisions, monitoring manual, Notice of Grant Award, policy updates, training materials, and monthly resource and project update emails.

To date, the GOSV has created and refined all grant management systems and tools needed to manage the MD VGF and is well-positioned to achieve all 2014 MD VGF goals. Reflected by the mid-year Grantee Progress Report submitted in April 2014, the GOSV and its sub-grantees are on target to meet all performance measure targets.

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A. STAFFING PLAN

The staff team responsible for managing the Maryland Volunteer Generation Fund will include a new Program Officer to be hired in the fall of 2014, GOSV Program Officer Dana Schwartz, GOSV Director Maureen Eccleston, Governor's Office of Community Initiatives Budget and Grants Director Shameka Littles, and GOSV Outreach Manager Julie Mendez. Prior to joining GOSV in March 2014, Dana Schwartz managed programs for current MD VGF sub-grantee Business Volunteers Maryland for four years and supervised multiple AmeriCorps members. Maureen Eccleston, GOSV Director since March 2014, will provide administrative and fiscal oversight for the project, supervise the Program Officers, and monitor MD VGF sub-grantee fiscal compliance. Maureen manages MD's AmeriCorps State funding portfolio, promotes national service, and expands resources to support effective volunteerism across the state. Prior to assuming this role, Maureen was the Director of an AmeriCorps State program for four years and a former Experience Corps and AmeriCorps NCCC staff member. Julie Mendez, GOSV Outreach Manager and staff member since 2011, will provide marketing and outreach support to the MD VGF sub-grantees. She is also an alumna of two AmeriCorps National programs. Finally, Shameka Littles, the Budget Director for the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, has overseen financial administration for the GOSV for 12 years. She manages internal and external financial systems and is responsible for ensuring agency compliance with state and federal regulations. Shameka is supported by the Governor's Finance Office, located in Annapolis, that provides all fiscal functions and tracking for the GOSV.

The GOSV is also supported by three key networks: the Maryland Volunteer Center Network, Maryland Nonprofits, and the network of local associations of professional volunteer administrators. These three networks, like the GOSV, are dedicated to supporting the delivery of effective and efficient human and environmental services. As part of their respective missions, these three networks expand knowledge and resources, promote service and volunteerism, and help identify best practices of program implementation for paid staff and volunteers.

B. EXPERIENCE MANAGING SIMILAR PROGRAMS

One of the GOSV's core functions is to provide AmeriCorps State grants management. Over the last four years, staff members have created, implemented, and refined a comprehensive program that includes outreach and training for potential grant applicants, grant selection processes, peer reviews,

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grant monitoring, and extensive training for new and existing program and planning grantees. This experience was drawn on heavily to launch and sustain MD VGF in 2010-2012 and 2014, and the GOSV's culture of continuous improvement and refinement has been infused in the MD VGF as well.

C. ENSURING COMPLIANCE

As with current AmeriCorps grantees, the GOSV will outline federal grant management and reporting requirements in the MD VGF sub-grant application, score applicants on their internal capacity and prior history managing federal funds during the grant review period, provide additional orientation and training on federal grants management at the start of the grant period, and monitor sub-grantees closely each month during the project year to ensure proper compliance and funding match. The GOSV will focus on orienting new sub-grantees to MD VGF requirements and refreshing experienced volunteer center staff on their responsibilities. Of note, the volunteer centers that received MD VGF sub-grants have had low staff turnover in project leadership roles, so the GOSV has been able to deepen communications with the centers instead of spending a great deal of time training new project staff. This stability has had a positive impact on training and is a good indicator that the sub-grantees will maintain their strong track record of project and fiscal compliance as well. Internally, the GOSV has an excellent record of compliance with the MD VGF.

D. EXPERIENCE MANAGING GRANTS

The GOSV was created in 1994 to implement the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Since its inception, the GOSV has managed a diverse portfolio of AmeriCorps program and planning sub-grantees each year with total AmeriCorps funds awarded as high as \$5.5 million and 1,100 AmeriCorps State members deployed. In 2013-2014, the GOSV manages 15 operating program grants; these grants total \$3.4 million and provided 612 AmeriCorps service positions in every region of the state. The program grants are a combination of AmeriCorps State Competitive and Formula.

In 2010, the GOSV received a VGF grant to support volunteer mobilization and capacity building in volunteer centers across the state. In the 2010-2012 and 2014 grant periods, the GOSV received over \$670,000; of this, \$575,000 was provided directly to a cohort of six community-based volunteer centers in the form of \$25,000 sub-grants each year. The GOSV has a regular schedule of self- and stakeholder-assessments that are conducted via on-line surveys, in-person focus group discussions, and routine staff meetings and evaluations. External stakeholders are routinely asked to provide

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feedback on strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of the commission's work (funding promotion, grant selection, grantee monitoring, training, etc.). All aspects of this internal self-assessment system will be applied to the MD VGF.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

The GOSV is housed within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI), the agency that houses the GOSV. The total GOCI budget is \$6.9 million. The MD VGF grant would represent 4% of the total GOCI budget. A portion of this allocation will be used to match the federal VGF grant. In addition, the sub-grantees will secure all matching funds required for the FY2014 MD VGF with approved staff salaries, office space, IT costs, and other approved sources. The GOSV will provide \$264,000 in matching funds from sub-grantees and the FY14 State of MD General Fund to support the MD VGF. Matching funds from sub-grantees will be provided by private foundations, corporations, donors, and local governments.

The GOSV requests \$264,000 in CNCS funds to support the MD VGF. The MD VGF FY2014 budget was developed with the assumption that the GOSV will award eight sub-grants of up to \$25,000 to local volunteer connector organizations and administer a \$25,000 Mini Grant Program. The budget reflects all goals and activities described in the grant application narrative. The CNCS funds will provide for a Program Officer to dedicate 65% time (26 hours per week) to the MD VGF, support the project supervision, and include sub-grants to eight volunteer connector organizations. All costs for travel to conduct monitoring visits and sub-grantee training will be provided as part of the GOSV's MD State General Fund allocation and with VGF funds; no additional funds will be needed for these activities.

The GOSV is supported by the Governor's Office and all the resources available to a state agency. These include adequate office space and systems to support the staff necessary to carry out this project and sufficient written and on-line resources to achieve all goals of the project.

CLARIFICATION

All clarifications made. No positions are budgeted over 100%.

Grant Characteristics