

Narratives

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism (UCSV), was created by state statute in 1994 and is comprised of 20 members representing local government, community based organizations and statewide networks. As the state's central coordinating body for service and volunteerism, the Commission is responsible for developing, implementing, and sustaining a vision and culture of civic engagement and national and community service within the state. Utah consistently leads the nation in volunteerism rates, as evidenced by the Corporation's own studies and statistics. While these volunteerism rates have held steady during the economic downturn, present conditions have led to a decline in the state's volunteer infrastructure. The current economic environment has resulted in both a reduction in resources and an increased demand for services.

VGF funding will provide UServeUtah with resources to establish a strong and consistent infrastructure to support volunteers in Utah. The overarching emphasis for this program is to increase the capacity of communities and organizations to effectively use volunteers to address community needs as well as increasing the number of highly skilled and long-term volunteers serving in Utah.

Building upon successes from the past four years of VGF, UServeUtah is proposing to use strategies outlined in the UCSV 2014-2016 strategic plan as the foundation for future VGF activities. 1) Provide successful statewide trainings that will ensure organizations are prepared to use volunteers effectively; 2) Support businesses in creating employee volunteer programs throughout the state; 3) Help local municipalities recognize and utilize volunteers as an effective means of addressing community needs.

As a result of these strategies communities and organizations will be in a position to more effectively use service & volunteerism as a strategy to fulfill their mission and to address critical community problems.

Program Design

PROGRAM DESIGN

DESCRIPTION OF NEED

Utah enjoys a reputation as having one of the strongest volunteer traditions in the nation.

Narratives

Unfortunately the largest problem we face in Utah is not a lack of interest in volunteering but a lack of capacity in our volunteer infrastructure, which has resulted in issues of volunteer retention and attrition. There are a number of factors contributing to this unhealthy trend: a proliferation of new, small nonprofits; a concentration of volunteers within a narrow segment of the nonprofit landscape; a dearth of knowledge and creative ability on the part of nonprofit managers to strategically utilize volunteers; and a rapid loss of traditional Volunteer Connector Organizations (VCO's) across the state.

Generally speaking, smaller and younger nonprofits need more assistance to be successful in their missions. Over one-third of Utah's charities were founded in the past ten years and 46%, compared to 42% nationally, have annual expenses of less than \$1 million. These younger and smaller charities tend to lack the capacity needed to effectively recruit, manage, and retain high quality volunteers. Anecdotally the staff at VCO's across Utah report that many nonprofits they work with are not prepared to take the volunteers they might send.

Complicating the matter even more is the fact that nearly 70% of all volunteers in Utah serve through religious organizations, a very narrow segment of our entire nonprofit sector. Clearly these volunteers are making a positive contribution to the state, but this leaves a majority of the state's public charities being served by only 30% of the state's current volunteers.

The state of Utah has also experienced a drastic reduction (50%) in both the number of VCO's and the capacity of these centers to connect volunteers to community organizations. In the past the VCO's have formed a statewide, primary support system for volunteer development. Loss of funding sources for volunteer connection services has further reduced the ability of the remaining VCO's to provide quality volunteer supports to their communities.

To more fully emphasize the impact of these changes, in a recent survey conducted by UCSV 83% of the not-for-profit organizations surveyed indicated that they were not familiar with the VCO in their region. In this same survey 84% of these non-profits indicated a need for volunteer management training, 76% help with volunteer recruitment and 78% volunteer retention.

To address the needs identified of increasing organizational volunteer management capacity and supporting VCO infrastructure, UServeUtah, through VGF resources, developed a Volunteer

Narratives

Management Train-the Trainer curriculum with a Trainer Certification and a Volunteer Management Certification (VMT). Training has been provided over the past three years and has been incredibly well received (past accomplishments will be more fully discussed later in the narrative.)

As with any program design, through the evaluation process additional areas of concern are identified and it is these areas that UServeUtah is looking to address with this new VGF funding request. One pressing need is for continued expanded nonprofit volunteer management capacity, and more specifically, executive support of volunteer programming. Additionally, because of the deterioration of the VCO infrastructure in the state there are significant questions regarding capacity and sustainability of many of these organizations as stand-alone entities. For this reason UServeUtah is looking at various delivery methods for this much needed training as well as creative ways to provide the resources that the state needs to most effectively utilize one of its most valuable resources; Volunteers!

The combination of all these factors paints a clear picture of the need to focus on the volunteerism infrastructure in Utah. For these reasons UServeUtah, as the states central coordinating body for service and volunteerism, feels it is critical to continue to provide the guidance and support needed to make this happen.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Strategy 1)

Provide successful statewide trainings that will ensure organizations are prepared to use volunteers effectively:

According to research done by the TCC Group, organizations with strong volunteer engagement programs are able to radically reduce their costs, increase efficiency & scale their work. Another report by Deloitte however, identifies the main constraint for organizations as lack of volunteer management infrastructure, specifically: supervision/management; deployment/placement; recruitment; training and evaluation. In the next phase of the VGF grant this strategy will focus on moving volunteer engagement from the "nice to do" to the "must do" level and re-focusing volunteer management systems to create organizational transformation through increased effectiveness and mission impact.

Activity-

Narratives

UServeUtah will sub-grant \$8,000 to each of 4 Certified VCOs to assist in development of a regional training plan for not-for-profit organizations. The primary roles of these VCO's will be: (1) train organizational executive leadership in understanding the need to deeply integrated volunteer roles into their work and infrastructure, thereby reducing their costs, increasing efficiency and scaling their organizations work. (2) provide training and mentoring to nonprofit managers on assessing volunteer needs and matching those needs with the strategic goals of the organization.

Measurement-

Output measures, including the number of organizations trained and type of training and assistance provided, will be collected by the VCO's and reported through progress reports to the Community Engagement Coordinator at the UServeUtah. A survey will be distributed to all nonprofits that receive assistance from a regional VCO's to ascertain how the support of the VCO improved their strategic management of volunteers and impacted their organizational mission.

Strategy2)

Support businesses in creating employee volunteer programs throughout the state:

This strategy presents a unique opportunity to collaborate with corporations who will then become local champions of service in each community. The value of skilled volunteer support for general operations, technology and professional services can be 500% greater than the value of other forms of volunteering. Needs and opportunities seem abundant: A survey from the Taproot foundation indicates that 92% of nonprofits say they don't get enough pro-bono support while LinkedIn for Good relates that 86% of professionals on LinkedIn reported wanting to volunteer their skills. Skilled volunteering is also good for business, providing major boosts to employee morale, skill development and enhancing reputation, brand and community relationships.

Activity-

UServeUtah will begin in year one with research of current corporate engagement and identify best practices of current employee volunteer programs. An online assessment to provide baseline information on current operations will be developed. Additional outreach to businesses without employee volunteer programs will be conducted and target businesses will be selected for training, made available through the "Billion + Change" initiative, based on multiple factors including the interest and capacity of the potential business.

Measurement-

Output measures, including the number of business reached, will be collected by UServeUtah, with a

Narratives

goal of 50 business engaged in discussions about employee volunteer programs in year one. Through engagement of pro-bono and other skilled based professionals, participating not-for-profits will report improved organizational capacity as reported through an online survey.

Strategy 3)

Help local municipalities recognize and utilize volunteers as an effective means of addressing community needs:

Utah municipalities are in a unique positioned to bring new leadership, facilitation, and innovation to address local issues. Through this strategy UServeUtah will work with local communities to develop a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on thinking creatively about the roles volunteers could play in helping address priority need areas and specific challenges that are most important to local communities.

Activity-

Identification of where municipalities are, in terms of volunteer engagement, through a baseline survey will begin the process in year one. Guided by the outcomes of the early phases of the project, future strategies will be refined in response to the needs identified and training developed base on the "Cities of Service" initiative which focuses on development of high-impact service plans at the local level.

Measurement-

Output measures, including the number of municipalities reached, will be collected by UServeUtah, with a goal of 150 municipalities completing the baseline survey in year one. Local municipalities will report increased volunteer engagement through service initiatives developed as identified through surveys collected by UServeUtah

Evaluation-

Drawing on best practices in quantitative & qualitative evaluation methods, this project will assess success and ensure continual improvements to the program to enhance impact. Key criteria to be measured in these evaluations are identified in the Measurements & Performance Measures sections.

Time Line and Milestones

January - June 2015 - Outreach/Surveying of Local Businesses and Municipalities.

February 2015 - VCO Grant RFP

Narratives

March 2015 - VMT Regional Training Grants Awarded

April 2015 - VCO Certification Training

April -- November 2015 - Regional Training Implementation

July - December 2015 - Research & development of training curriculum for business and municipalities

January 2016 - Launch of Cities of Service Training for Municipalities

January 2016 - Launch of Billion + Change Training for business

January 2016 - Continuation of VMT Training Program

January - December 2017 - Continuation/Evaluation of Programs

The outcomes of the activities described in this application will improve volunteerism in Utah on two levels. First, nonprofit organizations will have greater success in achieving their missions due to an increased ability to effectively and strategically recruit, manage, and retain volunteers. Secondly, businesses and communities will become part of the service delivery process, which in turn will provide critical resources to address community needs.

Ultimately this plan will significantly improve the recruitment, management and retention of high quality volunteers in Utah's nonprofits.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

UServeUtah will be utilizing the following required and complementary National Performance Measures;

- Number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants and hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations.

- 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.

UServeUtah utilizes progress reports from all organizations within the program to gather necessary data. Training is also provided to participant organizations on how to collect and measure the data they submit through the reports. The data collection instrument UServeUtah will have programs complete distinguishes between VGF volunteers and other volunteers recruited and managed by CNCS supported organizations thus avoiding duplication of numbers.

Narratives

SUSTAINABILITY

We have designed the program to provide minimal financial support to a limited number of organizations each year. We have focused, rather, in creating increased strategic volunteer management capacity throughout the nonprofit sector in Utah. This focus will expand the impact and the sustainability of this program well beyond the years of Volunteer Generation Grant funding.

Organizational Capability

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

For the past 20 years, UServeUtah has successfully administered National Service programs, engaged in community collaboration around volunteerism, supported youth service initiatives, and provided volunteer management training. The Utah Commission is comprised of 20 Governor-appointed members, including the Lt. Governor and supported by five full-time staff. Commission members represent a broad and diverse range of volunteer leaders.

UCSV has managed and coordinated National Service programs including AmeriCorps*State, AmeriCorps EAP, Promise Fellows and VISTA programs, since 1994. For nearly 20 years, UServeUtah has worked to establish high quality, competency-based training and technical assistance for these National Service programs. It has also administered 2010-2014 VGF grant and the Citizen Corps program for the State of Utah which is funded through federal sources. Recent successful and innovative collaborations with other agencies and organizations have been achieved through UServeUtah's focus on outcomes. Using the logic model of program development, UServeUtah has tackled a number of community issues, including building nonprofits' volunteer management capacity, youth service, and the launching of a web-based resource to connect volunteers with volunteer opportunities.

The UServeUtah Community Engagement Coordinator, who will lead the implementation of this project, is an established leader with several years in training and curriculum development, delivering training, designing courses, leading teams of trainers, and directing organizational initiatives. They have a proven track record of significant improvements in learning processes, productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction. The Coordinator is responsible for developing training programs and courses of instruction in the field of volunteer and community service program operations, volunteer administration, and inclusion

The Department of Heritage and Arts, the fiscal agent for UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism, employs a fiscal staff of 15 full time equivalents. Professional staff

Narratives

accountants within the department monitor expenditures against appropriations, reconcile accounts, reviews and approve payments; and prepare checks for disbursement. They are responsible for financial analysis and reporting. The department manages several federal grants and understands the intricacies of federal requirements, and specified grant terms. Their work is governed by strict internal controls that comply with all federal requirements. Many of the state spending restrictions mirror federal ones and systems are in place to ensure compliance at all levels. The Commissions has a current budget of \$3.5million of which \$3 million originates at the federal level. This grant request of \$150,000 would represent 4% of UCSV's total budget.

Partnerships will be a key part of the success of the USCV program. Key partnerships include the Nonprofit Academy for Excellence, the Utah Nonprofits Association, and Utah Campus Compact. The Nonprofit Academy for Excellence at the University of Utah is a professional education program that has been in operation for over three years. The program has trained nearly 200 professionals in nonprofit leadership and governance, human resource management, fund development and financial management. Courses are designed and taught by local nonprofit leaders and academicians with unparalleled experience and education. The primary component of the partnership with the Academy will be their participation in evaluation of the VCO Certification training. The Utah Nonprofits Association (UNA) is the statewide association for public charities in Utah. UNA will play a major role in helping USCV to outreach with Utah's charities. Another important partner will be the Utah Campus Compact (UCC). Their members include nine of the colleges and universities in Utah. The UCC works to promote opportunities for service-learning and community-based research for college students throughout the state. UCC will serve as a partner in the evaluation of the grant program.

BACKGROUND

UServeUtah received original VGF Funding in 2010 and began implementation of initiatives to support re-building of volunteer management infrastructure across the state. In year one Volunteer Management Training (VMT) curriculum was developed with modules which covered Volunteer Management and Program Assessment; Social Media for Nonprofits; Risk Management in Volunteer Programs; Volunteer Recruitment; Volunteer Recognition; Orientation & Training; Performance Reviews; Motivation & Retention; Volunteer Application & Position Description; Placement & supervision; Volunteer Program Evaluation as well as Adult Learning Styles and additional training for trainers. Through this Train-the-trainer program developed by UServeUtah, in years 2,3 & 4 over 150 VMT workshops have been held across the state with an average attendance of 30 individuals

Narratives

from local not-for-profit organizations, which equates to over 4500 individuals trained in critical volunteer management skills.

Through surveys of individuals attending the trainings, over 93% indicated that they have gained additional knowledge related to volunteer management and 88% indicate implement 3 or more effective management practices as a result of the training they received. All participants surveyed felt the training was highly useful and would recommend to others in their position. This past funding has allowed UServeUtah to train VCOs as trainers to deliver the curriculum, thus utilizing them as a local resource, as well as provide grant funding to these organizations to support the delivery of local trainings. These funds help support the dwindling infrastructure of the VCOs. If awarded new funding UServeUtah hopes to build on these past successes with the new focus addressed in this application.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

BUDGET/COST EFFECTIVENESS

The Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism is asking for \$140,000 in VGF funding and will be matching that amount at 50%.

The project budget supports UServeUtah staffing costs as well as 4VCO's that participate by providing funding to cover cost of training plan development and delivery of training. VCO's that are successful through the RFP process and receive the \$8,000 sub-grants will be required to provide a 100% in-kind or cash match.

The grant funds also include a \$500 grant for up to 20 business or municipal organizations to participate in MLK and 9/11 National Days of Service projects in all regions of the state. Each participant, in order to be eligible for mini-grant funds, will provide a 100% in-kind or cash match to support their local activities.

In addition, the Commission will seek support from other state, public and private partners and is confident they will provide resources to support these initiatives, such as local donations of cash, facilities, materials, and time. USCV continues to be a proactive community partner, aligning with the Utah Community Foundation along with the above mentioned partner organizations to maximize use of resources. We have worked with the Lt. Governor to include high profile Commissioners who have access to funding sources previously untapped.

Narratives

The Commission has actively raised match for a number of federal awards over the past 16 years. It is most successful in garnering three types of match: 1) funds to be re-granted to partners in a project, 2) funds associated with time limited projects, and 3) in-kind goods or services. Examples of success include \$50,000 raised annually to support the statewide Conference on Service, Utah's Emergency Management's funding of initial and ongoing Citizen Corps Council development (\$50,000 annually), media in-kind promotion of Summer of Service & Conference on Service (\$275,000), consulting services for a marketing plan valued at \$50,000.

CLARIFICATION RESPONSES:

Existing VGF Financial Status:

We project that all funding associated with our 2013 VGF grant will be expended by December 31, 2014. We are proposing that the new project period begin January 1, 2015.

Budget Clarification:

The funding line items for Cities of Service and Billion + Change trainings were submitted in error and have been changed to reflect Utah specific customization's of the national programs curriculum in year 1. These costs are now reflected in Section F-Contractual and Consultant Services.

Programmatic Clarification:

Cities of Service has a variety of resources to help a municipality incorporate service as a local strategy including; How to Develop a High-impact Service Plan; templates for various specific initiatives; and examples of service plans developed by other communities. We will work in year 1 to utilize the various resources to develop a customized outreach/training plan for Utah communities, based on Utah's unique characteristics with a high volume of volunteers.

Billion + Change also has a variety of resources focusing on engaging business in corporate volunteering including; Pro-bono in Action Training; Creating a Strong Skills-based Volunteer Program; Skilled Volunteering 101 as well as templates and toolkits. The plan in year 1 is similar to the Cities of Service plan described above. We will work to utilize the various resources to develop a customized outreach/training plan for Utah businesses that can be incorporated in years 2 & 3.

Grant Characteristics