

Narratives

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Maryland Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV) proposes to host the 2017 Atlantic Cluster Regional Training Conference (ACRTC) in June 2017. GOSV will work with the other states and territories in the cluster to make sure the training meets the needs of all national service participants. GOSV has experience providing high quality trainings for the national service and volunteerism sector in Maryland. America's Service Commissions (ASC), the national association of state service commissions, will provide significant support through a contractual agreement for the planning, development, and implementation of the conference. ASC will work closely with GOSV to ensure all of the deliverables are met and that the conference aligns with the other regions. GOSV is requesting \$115,000 to support the costs associated with a high-quality 2-3 day training for 600 national service program participants.

Program Design

Program Design

There is a growing demand for high quality, accountable, performance and evidence-based National Service programs. The State Commissions and State Offices with support from CNCS are responsible for providing support to our National Service programs to ensure they can meet the rigors of running a high quality national service program. This can only be achieved with efficient, effective and affordable trainings offered by and to State Commissions and national service programs and key stakeholders. Each state's service delivery mechanism must have clear performance measures, meticulous compliance, and guaranteed fiscal and administrative management. The GOSV in collaboration with America's Service Commissions (ASC), the national association of state service commissions, proposes a multi-day regional conference for AmeriCorps State and National programs, Senior Corps projects and other key CNCS national service programs in the Atlantic cluster. The 2017 ACRTC will plan a regional training conference that ensures all participants are better able to engage more Americans in results driven service, share improved impact data, and build an enriched knowledge of compliance competencies. The training conference will include tracks specific to the stakeholders and collaborative sessions to facilitate cross-stream dialogue.

LEAD APPLICANT

Narratives

GOSV proposes to host the Atlantic Cluster Regional Training in the spring of 2017. GOSV will work with the other states and territories in the Atlantic Cluster Region to ensure the training meets the needs of all participants. The cluster includes the State Service Commissions of Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Vermont. ASC, will provide significant support through a contractual agreement for the planning, development, and implementation of the conference. ASC will work closely with GOSV to ensure all of the deliverables are met and that the conference aligns with the other regions. We will work closely with the Maryland State Office under State Director Crystal Biles and with Mal Coles, Atlantic Area Manager, to ensure the participation of all national service programs in the cluster including Senior Corps, AmeriCorps State and National, Volunteer Generation Fund and Social Innovation Fund grantees. The Atlantic Region has a wealth of expertise already at the table and we will build off of the successful regional trainings completed in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Connecticut. ASC will provide continuity and assistance in adapting specificity as needed by each region.

REGION PROPOSED:

The proposed service region aligns with CNCS's geographic allocation for the Atlantic Cluster as listed in the Announcement of Federal Funding Availability. These 14 states, district and territories include CT, DC, DE, MA, ME, MD, NH, NJ, NY, PA, PR, RI, USVI and VT.

SELECTION OF HOST CITY AND FACILITY:

GOSV proposes to host the conference at a location in Baltimore, Maryland. Baltimore City has easy access to direct ground transportation (train, bus or highway) and affordable airfare into Baltimore Washington International Airport located just outside of Baltimore and is approximately a 20-30 minute drive to downtown Baltimore City. Preliminary findings indicate there is a Sheraton, Marriott, Hyatt and a Hilton and a convention center that can accommodate 400+ participants at a multi-day conference and upwards of a dozen breakout rooms for workshops. The hotel room rates in Baltimore are under \$170 a night, which is very reasonable for this region. The facility selected will be fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

APPLICANT EXPERIENCE

The GOSV has a 21 year history of supporting high quality national service programs in Maryland.

Narratives

Our office has the benefit of having relationships with the Baltimore City Convention Bureau as well as the Maryland State Tourism office as well as their volunteer boards to make sure we give the best experience possible to those that attend the 2017 Mid Atlantic Conference.

We will work with our AmeriCorps programs, especially Volunteer Maryland who has extensive experience working with training conferences. We will also engage our volunteer Commissioners who are national leaders in helping to organize training conferences. Our volunteer Commissioners are senior leaders in organizations such as The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Service Year, Under Armour, and the Baltimore City Public School System.

GOSV Program Team attended the cluster conferences in MA and CT. Their experience supporting our portfolio of 18 AmeriCorps programs in Maryland, as well as their knowledge of what was successful at the past two Regional Trainings, will help us craft a regional conference that will well meet the needs of program across the region. In addition, we can tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience in Maryland related to national service, which is the home to many well-known national service programs and SIF recipients, for local speakers and outreach.

ASC will play a critical role in the delivery of this multi-day training. The ASC Deputy Director, Rachel Bruns, will coordinate or support the following aspects of conference planning: coordinate and lead an inclusive conference planning committee; agenda development; sponsorship solicitation from national organizations with interest in supporting multiple regional conferences; event promotion including save the dates, registration invitations, promotion on ASC website and social media; pre/post event email(s) to attendees and post-event attendee survey; development and maintenance of central website for regional conferences; support in identification and solicitation of keynotes; support of set-up, tear down, and registration check-in for event; purchase, launch, and management of online registration system including providing reports required by CNCS; presenter solicitation/outreach for workshops; presenter communication; collection and posting of presenter materials to central website; and presenter contracting, as applicable; collection of registration fees via check and credit card; facilitation of lead state planning calls; participation in CNCS regional training hosted calls; coordination with CNCS on CNCS trainers/presenters/keynotes; coordination of event on-site staffing; and customer service support for event attendees.

Finally, together with the other states in the cluster, there is considerable background in providing training, technical assistance, outreach and monitoring for national service programs. Leveraging the

Narratives

vast experience of each commission, GOSV is well-poised to successfully deliver a 2017 ACRTC that will meet the training needs of participants and provide a valuable conference experience.

OUTREACH, MARKETING AND ENGAGEMENT:

The 2017ACRTC will be promoted to CNCS Area Managers, State Offices, Senior Corps Associations, and Commissions across the region. By January 2017, a proposed agenda, trainer credentials, and registration information will be published. Marketing materials will be posted on ASC's, GOSV's, and cluster conference web sites, social media (Facebook, Twitter), and e-news subscriptions. We will work with ASC and CNCS to develop branding for the conference to be used on all materials. Each commission in the cluster will be responsible for forwarding marketing materials to their key stakeholders, such as their AmeriCorps program directors. We will rely on the State Office to encourage their Senior Corps grantees to participate; however, we will also seek to market this opportunity to them directly, along with AmeriCorps National Direct programs, VGF recipients, and SIF grantees in the cluster. The minimum target enrollment for the 2017 ARCTC is 600 participants made up of 200 AmeriCorps State and National program staff; 200 RSVP, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion program staff; 100 Commission staff; and 100 other key stakeholders such as Social Innovation Fund grantees, Volunteer Generation Fund grantees, CNCS staff, and presenters.

CONFERENCE DESIGN

ASC will assist GOSV in forming a committee that represents the 14 states, Washington, D.C., and the territories in the region and includes delegates from AmeriCorps State/National, Senior Corps, CNCS State Offices, and commission staff. The committee will meet regularly upon CNCS' notice of intent to award these resources to GOSV. The committee will determine the theme, agenda design, and learning modules of the 2017 ACRTC beyond those sessions required by CNCS that make up the core curriculum. It will be 3 days in length. Each day will include a general plenary session, followed by a series of tailored breakout sessions, and will conclude with a networking activity/service project. Opportunities for specific stakeholder groups to host independent meetings, orientations, and trainings may be offered pre or post conference upon request.

At a minimum, the following tracks of learning will be offered at the conference: AmeriCorps State and National, Senior Corps, and commissions. We will include specific tracks for SIF and VGF grantees if outreach indicates they would participate. Required trainings for CNCS competencies

Narratives

regarding performance measure data collection, applying evidence-based theories of change, program evaluation, and grants/financial management will be offered and featured prominently on the agenda. Including the topics listed above, the training conference will serve the most common and critical needs of the national service programs in the region. Needs will be identified through analysis of commissions' and CNCS State Offices' needs assessments, a survey of grantee staff in the region, summaries of recent trainings, and/or feedback from prior cluster trainings. Analysis of this information will ensure that learning priorities meet the needs of the programs across the region, and will allow for appropriate design of the agenda's structure, emphasis, and flow to attain maximum educational impact. Wherever possible, the training conference will utilize peer trainers in order to tap into the subject matter expertise available in the field. Peer trainers may be identified by the committee, CNCS State Office staff, or programs. We will work closely with ASC and CNCS to identify CNCS staff to provide all of the required CNCS topics of performance measures and grant/financial compliance. CNCS senior leadership will also be invited and requested as potential keynote presenters. Post conference, all learning materials and curricula (slides, handouts, etc.) will be delivered to the National Service Knowledge Network for online cataloging and ongoing reference.

OUTPUTS, EVALUTATION AND KNOWLEDGE GAIN:

We will administer a post-event assessment that measures participant satisfaction and ability to apply new learning. We will administer on-site assessments of each session and of the overall conference to gauge both participant satisfaction and ability to apply new learning in their professional setting. Based on our experience with hosting statewide conferences, we feel it is essential to get this feedback while conference attendees are on-site as electronic evaluations sent as a follow-up have a much lower response rate. We will share our assessment data with future host states for continuous improvement for future regional trainings.

TIMELINE:

We propose holding the Atlantic Cluster Regional Training Conference in June 2017. Holding the conference in June ensures we will not have issues related to winter storms. The benchmarks for this timeframe are itemized as follows: September 30, 2016: Announcement/negotiation/approval of cooperative agreement; October 31, 2016: Facility contract in place. ACRTC Committee members

Narratives

begin to meet regularly; December 31, 2016: All trainers identified and confirmed; marketing materials developed; February 1, 2017: Online registration opens and logistics coordination continues. General Registration is March 1 thru mid to late May depending upon when in June the conference is scheduled. July 15, 2017: Learning materials submitted to CNCS/Knowledge Network. Evaluation data returned; July 2017: 90 days after conference, financials reconciled and reported to CNCS.

HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND ROLES: The GOSV along with ASC will serve as the point of contact with CNCS and will submit all required materials. GOSV will manage the budget and allowable costs, secure conference facility, and print materials. GOSV will co-facilitate the planning committee with ASC. The planning committee will guide conference development, secure trainers, and assist with promotion. GOSV will respond to all requests for reasonable accommodations and ensure accessibility is fully realized. The conference registration system will contain prominent messaging for persons with disabilities to request reasonable accommodations. ASC will market the conference to the national service network and provide continuous support to the planning committee. All members of the Atlantic Cluster region will assist with keynote speakers, invited guests, presenters and facilitators and will promote the conference to their network of programs.

Organizational Capability

APPLICANT EXPERIENCE

The GOSV has a 21 year history of supporting high quality national service programs in Maryland. Our office has the benefit of having relationships with the Baltimore City Convention Bureau as well as the Maryland State Tourism office as well as their volunteer boards to make sure we give the best experience possible to those that attend the 2017 Mid Atlantic Conference.

We will work with our AmeriCorps programs, especially Volunteer Maryland who has extensive experience working with training conferences. We will also engage our volunteer Commissioners who are national leaders in helping to organize training conferences. Our volunteer Commissioners are senior leaders in organizations such as The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Service Year, Under Armour, and the Baltimore City Public School System.

GOSV Program Team attended the cluster conferences in MA and CT. Their experience supporting our portfolio of 18 AmeriCorps programs in Maryland, as well as their knowledge of what was successful at the past two Regional Trainings, will help us craft a regional conference that will well meet the needs of program across the region. In addition, we can tap into the wealth of knowledge

Narratives

and experience in Maryland related to national service, which is the home to many well-known national service programs and SIF recipients, for local speakers and outreach.

ASC will play a critical role in the delivery of this multi-day training. The ASC Deputy Director, Rachel Bruns, will coordinate or support the following aspects of conference planning: coordinate and lead an inclusive conference planning committee; agenda development; sponsorship solicitation from national organizations with interest in supporting multiple regional conferences; event promotion including save the dates, registration invitations, promotion on ASC website and social media; pre/post event email(s) to attendees and post-event attendee survey; development and maintenance of central website for regional conferences; support in identification and solicitation of keynotes; support of set-up, tear down, and registration check-in for event; purchase, launch, and management of online registration system including providing reports required by CNCS; presenter solicitation/outreach for workshops; presenter communication; collection and posting of presenter materials to central website; and presenter contracting, as applicable; collection of registration fees via check and credit card; facilitation of lead state planning calls; participation in CNCS regional training hosted calls; coordination with CNCS on CNCS trainers/presenters/keynotes; coordination of event on-site staffing; and customer service support for event attendees.

Finally, together with the other states in the cluster, there is considerable background in providing training, technical assistance, outreach and monitoring for national service programs. Leveraging the vast experience of each commission, GOSV is well-poised to successfully deliver a 2017 ACRTC that will meet the training needs of participants and provide a valuable conference experience.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The registration fee will be between \$165-\$225. The actual fee will be determined once we have selected the venue and determined all the costs associated with the regional conference. We will utilize CNCS funds to cover the hard costs such as meeting room rental, audio/visual costs, trainers' fees and travel as well as some of GOSV's staff time and ASC's contractual fees. The budget proposed, including the \$115,000 request of CNCS funds, is sufficient to provide the participants with a quality conference and an effective and efficient learning experience.

Clarification Summary

August 1st. response:

Narratives

1. Please describe your plan to fully represent Senior Corps in all phases of the conference delivery (training needs assessment, event planning, etc.) ?

Senior Corps programs will have equal opportunity for input into the training planning and implementation as AmeriCorps State/National programs through the needs assessment and planning committee.

A training needs survey will be distributed to state offices in the region with the request to share with all their Senior Corps grantees to get a comprehensive understanding of training interests and needs. The survey results will be analyzed by the planning committee to identify training workshop needs.

Senior Corps will be an integral part of the planning process by including the MD state office in the planning committee, as well as at least 1 Senior Corps program representative from each planning committee state. Planning committee members will be identified by asking each state office to nominate or refer a planning committee member to represent Senior Corps by a specific deadline.

The planning committee will be facilitated by ASC staff who has extensive experience working with and understanding the training need of Senior Corps. The ASC staff person formerly worked at an organization hosting RSVP, SCP and FGP programs. In addition, the staff previously served as liaison to the Senior Corps program associations in Iowa. The ASC staff has participated in the planning of the past 3 years of regional trainings, with positive feedback and input from Senior Corps grantees.

2. Please describe your plan to provide necessary fiscal monitoring and oversight of the regional conference cooperative agreement. Include specific descriptions of commission staff roles and how you will separate this award from other CNCS funds. ?

Having a number of commission staff working on this grant combined with the other grants we oversee makes us concern about mixing up timekeeping as well as grant allocations for payroll. For that reason the GOSV director will be spearheading the planning of this training conference along with a newly hired (by Sept. 1) training manager with support from our office's fiscal officer and procurement officer.

Between August 1st and October 1st the draft budget for this conference will be constantly changing

Narratives

as we receive proposals from hotels to host this national training. The working budget will be shared amongst the GOSV director, GOSV fiscal director and ASC through google sheets.

The roles will be broken out by:

GOSV director: Will work with Visit Maryland and Visit Baltimore to secure the best location for this training conference at the best price. GOSV director will also work with ASC and the planning committee to make sure the training needs of the AmeriCorps programs are met. GOSV director will also convene a host committee of Maryland AmeriCorps programs, alums and supporters of AmeriCorps to make sure we have we have the volunteers we need to support this conference.

ASC: will help establishing a committee of the 14 states that will be attending this training conference. ASC will also help recruit the speakers and oversees the planning of the training session to make sure we have the training courses that the AmeriCorps programs want and need. ASC will also manage the conference registration process and the surveys that will be needed.

GOSV procurement officer and fiscal officer: will oversee the budget for this grant along with the GOSV director. The procurement officer and fiscal officer will also make sure that this conference follows the guidelines that Maryland has in regards to receiving three bids on all budget items that cost over \$500. The procurement officer and fiscal officer will also ensure that this conference pays only the state rates or taxes that needs to be paid since this conference is hosted by the Governor's Office.

3. We have fixed all items that relate to question number 3 and questions in Budget Analysis.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status