2020-2021
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals Due: Friday, September 18, 2020

ISSUED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS SERVICE ALLIANCE WITH SUPPORT FROM THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Click Here to access MSA’s Online Grants System and Submit your Application

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Youth Development Volunteer Initiative

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) is pleased to release a Request for Proposals for its Youth Development Volunteer Initiative (YDVI). MSA values the critical role that youth-serving agencies and volunteers play in the development of the state’s most vulnerable young people. MSA seeks to award matching grants up to $10,000 to provide capacity-building opportunities to nonprofits and Volunteer Connector Organizations* to better engage volunteers in youth development programming by creating, expanding and/or replicating promising models.

*Volunteer Connector Organizations include agencies that connect individuals with volunteer opportunities and support organizations in effectively using those volunteers to create meaningful change in local communities.

Grant funding is contingent on the availability of funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Grant payments will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by all documentation required by MSA, in compliance with the rules for the administration of state and federal funds. Grants awarded under this initiative will be for the period of December 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA), established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization. As the state commission on volunteerism and service, we foster collaboration and public-private partnerships at the local, state and federal level to grow volunteerism and service initiatives in Massachusetts. Our strong partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies allow us to mobilize funding to advance service and volunteerism through the AmeriCorps, Commonwealth Corps, and Volunteer Generation Fund initiatives. We have a 28-year proven track record of bringing volunteerism and service resources to hundreds of organizations from Pittsfield to New Bedford and Springfield to Lowell. We believe in the power of volunteerism and service to improve the quality of life of all residents of the Commonwealth, and we seek to understand and address the changing needs of Massachusetts and allocate resources to the strongest effect.

The Corporation for National and Community Service

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through its multitude of programs, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action. Through Volunteer Generation Fund grants, CNCS seeks to fund effective approaches that expand volunteering, strengthen the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit and retain skill-based volunteers, and develop strategies to effectively use volunteers to solve problems. Administered by MSA, the Youth Development Volunteer Initiative grant is funded by the Volunteer Generation Fund.
Project Scope
The overall goal of the Youth Development Volunteer Initiative is to strengthen and sustain nonprofits and Volunteer Connector Organizations (VCOs) in new and existing youth development programming as they recruit, retain, manage, and support increased numbers of volunteers.

Youth Development Volunteer Initiative funds are available for the:
1. Establishment of a new youth development program within a youth-serving agency that will utilize new or existing volunteers;
2. Expansion of a current youth development program within a youth-serving agency to serve a new population or geographic area not currently served by the program, while increasing the number of youth served through the engagement of volunteers;
3. Enhancement of a volunteer program through the creation of systems and recruitment efforts to support new youth-serving volunteer positions impacting historically underserved youth;
4. Development of new or expanded programming that engages youth as volunteers;
5. Creation or enhancement of a youth development program at a Volunteer Connector Organization that utilizes and expands the current volunteer base and/or;
6. Response to emerging volunteer programming needs that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Historically Underserved Youth
MSA will prioritize organizations that will create or enhance volunteer programs or volunteer positions that will impact youth categorized as “historically underserved”. This group of young people face higher challenges due to intrinsic and external factors and are less likely to advance into a productive and prosperous adulthood. Grantees will be expected to provide parameters for their classification of “underserved youth” within the application narrative as well as document the number of “underserved youth” impacted by the grant funding and volunteer efforts provided. Grantees will provide the tracking method and tools used to determine the number of youth from their program who are categorized as “underserved youth”.

Volunteer Engagement
Through this initiative, youth-serving nonprofits will be expected to strengthen the capacity and infrastructure of new or existing youth development program(s) through the engagement of volunteers. Agencies will be held accountable for providing relevant, competency-based volunteer roles and opportunities that attract and retain high-caliber volunteers to support youth within the program. Organizations will be expected to develop a system or utilize technology-based tracking systems necessary to collect and report data that demonstrate results.

Volunteer Management
Nonprofits and Volunteer Connector Organizations must demonstrate their ability to effectively support volunteer activities, create meaningful opportunities, and manage the volunteer experience. Proposals must clearly describe a strategy to increase the number and/or experience of people who...
serve in meaningful roles in one or more programs within their agency. MSA is seeking substantial evidence indicating their ability to develop strategies and goals toward this end.

MSA seeks to fund programs in the above areas from a variety of organizational sizes and types and that represent the geographic diversity in Massachusetts. However, in the interest of funding high quality programs, the percentage of funds to be allocated has not been set in advance.

**Timeline**

**Intent to Apply:** If planning to apply, please submit an [Intent to Apply Form](#) by Friday, September 4, 2020. **Please note:** While this is not a required step, it is helpful for us in planning our review process, so please fill it out once you begin your application.

**Technical Assistance Webinar:** MSA Will provide an optional technical assistance webinar for this RFP on Tuesday September 1st at 1:00p.m. This webinar will be recorded and posted on [www.mass-service.org](http://www.mass-service.org). [Chick here](#) to register for the TA webinar. If you have specific questions regarding the RFP, please contact Chris Woods at 617-542-2455 ext.214.

Proposals must be received no later than 5:00p.m. of Friday, September 18, 2020. Your application must be submitted through MSA’s [online grant system](#), Applicants will be notified of the status of their grant proposal by the end of October.

The grantee period will begin December 1, 2020 and end on August 31, 2021. All project work must be completed (and all grant funds expended) by August 31, 2021. **Please note:** Project expenditures occurring outside of the grant period will not be eligible for reimbursement or as a source of match unless grantee has received prior approval from MSA.

Grantees are required to submit a final report, included project/initiative outcomes by September 15, 2021.

**Eligibility**

Funding for this proposal is made available to the following organizations:

- Nonprofit organizations (incorporated with 501(c)(3) status) that have been in existence for at least one year prior to the date on which the organization submits an application;
- State, municipal, and county governments, including departments and agencies therein; and
- Native American tribes.
Restrictions
Organizations may not replace staff time or other expenses already being covered by existing MSA grant funding with funds to be provided through the grant described in this RFP. Additionally, MSA will not fund activities that engage in the following:

- Provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytizing;
- Assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
- Finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office; or impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Displace staff positions with volunteers, and
- Charge volunteers to participate in service projects/initiatives or programming.

Administrative Requirements

General Requirements
Organizations receiving these funds are required to:

- Participate in a grant management and compliance webinar prior to grant allocation (date and time TBD);
- Create or access a technology-based tracking systems necessary to collect and report data that demonstrates results;
- Include MSA and CNCS logos on program materials, volunteer recognition items, and in publicity;
- Submit a mid-year and final report on the program that includes, at a minimum, performance measurements listed on page 7 (template provided by MSA);
- Participate in a mandatory mid-year training and grantee meeting (date TBD);
- Host a site visit by MSA staff if requested; and
- Submit at minimum a Final Financial Report/Request for Reimbursement, with all required documentation of expenditures, by September 15, 2021. Only expenses for which proper documentation has been received will be reimbursed.

Criminal History Checks
As stated by the Corporation for National and Community Service, organizations that are awarded the 2020-2021 YDVI grant must conduct CORI and NSOPW checks on all staff members listed in the grant budget (under either requested or matching funds). Staff listed on the grant budget who live outside of MA are required to undergo their state’s criminal record check in addition to the CORI. Also, in accordance with these standards, all staff members listed in the grant budget that will have recurring access to vulnerable populations (youth under the age of 18, individuals with disabilities, or adults over the age of 65) will need to undergo an FBI criminal history check in addition to the CORI and NSOPW checks.
Expenses connected with the CORI, NSOPW, and FBI criminal history checks are considered an allowable use of grant funds, to the extent that they are required for the activities to comply with applicable laws.

**Reporting**

Organizations should be prepared to track the following during the full grant period, to be submitted in the mid and final project reports:

- Number of total volunteers currently managed by your organization
- Number of hours current volunteers have contributed to your organization
- Number of youth served by the organization
- Number of total volunteers supported by the grant funding
- Total number of volunteer hours supported by the grant funding
- Number of new (anticipated) volunteers recruited/managed for this specific initiative
- Number of hours new volunteers have contributed to your organization
- Number of new (anticipated) youth served by the proposed program
- Number of underserved youth impacted by the proposed program
- Overall community impact

Grantees are expected to provide parameters for their classification of “underserved youth” within the application narrative as well as document the number of underserved youth impacted by the grant funding and volunteer efforts provided. Grantees will provide the tracking method and tools used to determine the number of youth from their program who are categorized as underserved.
**Match Overview and Usage of Funds**

**Match Overview**
The Massachusetts Service Alliance anticipates awarding grants of up to **$10,000** each. The number of Youth Development Volunteer Initiative grants awarded will depend on the quality of proposals received. **Grantees will be required to provide a bottom-line, dollar-for-dollar match of the budget to support the project.** All programs receiving support will be required to report the resources utilized to match grant funds. Matching funds can be a combination of cash and in-kind match. Volunteer time contributed to the program is not an acceptable source of match. Programs may not use other federal funds to match this grant.

**Please Note:** Given the current crisis due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, if an organization is unable to provide all or some of the match required, an organization may complete the Match Waiver Form, which can be found on Tab 3 of MSA’s budget form.

**Usage of Funds**
Funds are intended for service project/initiative development and implementation, including:

- Coordination and staff time contributed to youth development planning and activities;
  - Staff time is only eligible for grant funding and as a source of match if the staff salary is paid by private, state, or local dollars. **Salaries paid by federal monies are ineligible for funding and as a source of match.**
- Costs for supplies, materials, etc. directly related to the implementation of activities;
  - **MSA will not award more than $500 for the purchase of food and refreshments.**
- Volunteer recruitment, screening, orientation and training, recognition, and reward;
  - **MSA will not award more than $700 for the purchase of volunteer appreciation items.**
- Costs associated with transportation and other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses directly related to development and implementation of the project/initiative; and
- Communication materials and activities designed to share project/initiative results with the community.

**Prohibited Usage of Funds**

- Volunteer or service member payments or stipends (also an unallowable source of match)
- The purchase of equipment.
  - **Equipment, defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and/or acquisition cost of $1,000 or more per unit.**
- The purchase of gift cards/gift certificates (purchased and donated gift cards/gift certificates are also an unallowable source of match)
- Indirect costs as its own line item (costs related to occupancy and communication are permissible)
Application Instructions

Your application will be submitted online through our grants system. Please make sure to complete and submit each of the following components. Please note that all attachments will be uploaded as part of your application.

Online Application Checklist

☐ Application Cover Page (provided in online system)
☐ Project/Initiative Proposal Narrative
☐ Uploaded: Budget Form
☐ Uploaded: Most recent audit or 990
☐ Uploaded: 501(c)3 letter or MA Certificate of Tax Exemption (ST-2 or ST-5)

Chick here to access MSA’s Online Grants System and Submit your Application

Submission Deadline
5:00pm, Friday, September 18, 2020
Faxed, emailed, or hard copy transmissions will NOT be accepted.
Any application that is not complete and/or does not comply with all submission requirements may not be reviewed.

Technical Assistance related to this RFP should be directed to
Christopher Woods, Program Officer for Volunteer Initiatives
617.542.2544 x214
cwoods@mass-service.org
Proposal Narrative Instructions
Please follow the instructions below when completing your online application. Please ensure that all sections of this RFP are completed in their entirety. Each proposal should be comprised of the following:

Executive Summary (150 word limit)
- Briefly provide an overview of project.

Background / History of Organization (300 word limit)
- Describe the organization’s history, mission, overall goals and/or objectives.
- Provide specific examples of your organization’s experience and past accomplishments in the proposed areas of activity and your experience operating and overseeing a program comparable to the one proposed including experience working with and managing volunteers.
- Describe the staffing and infrastructure that your organization has in place to ensure effective program oversight.
- Provide the organization’s background in engaging underserved youth, including past successes and challenges.

Fiscal and Programmatic Oversight (300 word limit)
- Describe the organization’s capacity to manage a federal grant and to provide appropriate fiscal and programmatic oversight. Provide examples of other federal/state grants received, including amount and duration.
- Describe current systems in place to ensure federal/state fiscal requirements are followed (i.e., providing sufficient back-up and supporting documentation for reimbursement request and matching funds).
- Describe your organization’s ability to secure in-kind donations or resources to provide a dollar-for-dollar match to meet this requirement. How will this be tracked and reported?

Community Need (250 word limit)
- Define the demographics of the community served and target population of youth.
- Provide the organization’s definition of “historically underserved youth”.
- Describe the specific need that your proposed program or project will address with specific data points and/or examples.
- How will a Youth Development Volunteer Initiative Grant enhance your capacity to meet the needs of under-served areas or populations in your community?
- Describe in detail how engaging volunteers will be an effective means of alleviating the identified need described.
- If applicable, describe how your program has been affected due to COVID-19 and the emerging needs for volunteer programming

Program Design and Development (1,400 word limit)
- Explain in detail the program being proposed and its scope. Discuss the goals, objectives, activities, and program structure.
Describe how the proposed program will benefit the underserved youth being served, or how they will be recruited into the program if not currently being served.

Provide a timeline of activities and benchmarks for the grant period beginning December 1, 2020 and ending August 31, 2021.

Describe the plan for outreach to involve volunteers or other community organizations and partners. Please include any current partnerships in place that will help in enhance the outcomes of this initiative.

Provide evidence on how volunteers will be utilized as part of the proposed program and how they will receive adequate training and support to successfully complete their assignments.

Discuss volunteer management practices used at the organization, including onboarding methods, supervision, and evaluation.

Describe the plan and process for collecting data (number of participants, number of underserved youth, number of volunteer hours, etc.) and evaluating your program.

**Performance Measures and Evaluation (400 word limit)**

- Outline at least two clear programmatic goals for youth being served, with measurable outcomes. Please specify how you will identify and measure impact on underserved youth being served.
- Outline at least two goals for volunteers engaged in the program, with measurable outcomes.
- Identify your anticipated results. Describe how you will achieve these results.
- Explain the tools being used to measure the results (e.g., pre/post testing)
- How will you report on your findings?
- What is the overall change you would like to see after the 9-month grant cycle?

**Sustainability (200 word limit)**

- Explain in detail your strategy to sustain the impact of the program beyond the grant.
- Describe your strategy for volunteer retention to increase the likelihood that first-time volunteers will stay involved.

**For Previous Grantees (200 word limit)**

- Please briefly describe your previous Youth Development Volunteer Initiative and the outcomes or successes you had.
- Describe how continued funding for 2020-2021 will build upon or expand the current programming supported by the previous Youth Development Volunteer Initiative.


**Budget Instructions**

You may download the budget form [here](#). This file will be uploaded as part of your [online application](#).

A sample budget with acceptable calculations and descriptions can be accessed [here](#).

**Budget Summary (Tab 1)**

- **Request (Column A)** – The dollar amount by line item category for which you are applying. This total amount cannot exceed the maximum award amount of $10,000.
- **Match (Column B)** – The dollar amount by line item category that you are contributing to the project. *Please note that your total match amount must meet or exceed your total request.*
- **Total (Column C)** – The total budget amount by line item category of the project.

**Budget Narrative (Tab 2)**

1) **Staff**

   a. **Definition**: Professional staff that provide direct services to the project.
   
   b. **Description Column**: Include each individual staff’s full-year salary and FTE rate (the percentage of time individual staff will directly work on the project) OR hourly rate as well as the number of hours per week and number of weeks assigned to this project. Each staff salary should be pro-rated to reflect the grant period *(December 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021)*.
   
   c. **Considerations**:
      
      i. Organizations may not replace staff time already being covered by existing MSA grant funding with funds to be provided through the grant described in this RFP.
      
      ii. Staff time is only eligible for grant funding and as a source of match if the staff salary is paid by private, state, or local dollars. **Salaries paid by federal monies are ineligible for funding and as match.**
      
      iii. Funds may not be used to pay volunteers and/or additional AmeriCorps and Commonwealth Corps member stipends for service performed in connection with projects/initiatives (nor are volunteer or service member hours an appropriate source of match).
      
      iv. Any staff listed in the budget (request or match) will be required to undergo the appropriate criminal history checks.

2) **Fringe Benefits**

   a. **Definition**: Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K.
   
   b. **Description Column**: Provide a calculation or rate for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit rate is over 30%, please list each benefit separately.
   
   c. **Considerations**:
      
      i. Holidays, leave, and other vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rate but rather are absorbed into the salary budget (staff line item)
3) **Consultants & Contractual Services**  
   a. **Definition**: Services that cannot be provided by any employees of the organization.  
   b. **Description Column**: Include description of services being provided as well as an hourly rate and the number of hours to be provided.

4) **Supplies and Materials**  
   a. **Definition**: Project related supplies and materials.  
   b. **Description Column**: Each supply and material expense must have its own line item and description. All line items over $500 require a detailed description of how amount was derived, including cost per unit (i.e., total amount / number of units = cost per unit).  
   c. **Considerations**:  
      i. MSA will not fund more than $500 for the purchase of food and refreshments.  
      ii. MSA will not fund more than $700 for the purchase of volunteer appreciation items (e.g., t-shirts, mugs, etc.).  
      iii. MSA will not fund the purchase of equipment (see page 8)

5) **Travel**  
   a. **Definition**: Costs for any official business travel related to the project (e.g., delivery services, fuel expended, taxi services).  
   b. **Description Column**: Each travel expense must have its own line item and description. Please include per mile costs.  
   c. **Considerations**:  
      i. MSA cannot reimburse above the federally approved mileage reimbursement rate. This rate is currently .575 cents/mile. If the federal rate changes in 2021, grantees may use the updated rate.

6) **Occupancy**  
   a. **Definition**: Costs of space for staff, meetings, etc. used directly for project planning and implementation.  
   b. **Description Column**: Each occupancy expense must have its own line item and description. For each expense, provide a pro-rated cost allocation calculation

7) **Communication**  
   a. **Definition**: Postage, advertisement, delivery costs, etc. needed for the project.  
   b. **Description Column**: Each expense must have its own line item and description.

8) **Other**  
   a. **Definition**: Special costs related to the individual project. Costs not listed in any of the above categories.  
   b. **Description Column**: Provide a detailed description of each line item.