



WV State AmeriCorps Competitive Grant

Technical Assistance Call FAQ

December 1, 2017

Q: Can we work with the Commission one-on-one to ensure our performance measure is aligned or should we do our best and submit?

A: During this initial phase, all technical assistance must be open, fair, and available to everyone. Please use the [Performance Measure Instructions](#) to select your output and outcome(s) then submit your application by the December 13th deadline. We will work with individual applicants throughout the review and clarification period to strengthen performance measures and to ensure alignment.

Q: Would it be helpful for a continuation applicant to submit the full application prior to the deadline?

A: Yes. All applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible, but no later than the published deadlines. Early submission allows applicants time to address any potential eGrants issues and provides Volunteer West Virginia staff additional time for the internal review process.

Q: In the Application Instructions, CNCS uses the phrase operating sites. Does “operating sites” mean the same as “service sites”?

A: The definition of “operating sites” in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance indicates that “operating sites” are National Direct-specific.

Q: Does the Corporation really want us to “say no more than is necessary?”

A: Yes. The Corporation has always requested very specific, focused information; however, this Notice more definitively explains this expectation of clear, concise narrative.

Q: How do I find my performance measure?

A: You can view your previous grant applications which include your performance measure(s) in eGrants.

Q: How many performance measures are required?

A: CNCS only requires one, aligned performance measure per application. The Commission highly recommends applicants stick with a single performance measure when possible.

Q: Is it okay to eliminate performance measures with the new application?

A: Yes. The Commission highly recommends that applicants choose the strongest, aligned performance measure to include in their new application.

Q: Is it okay to have multiple outcomes for a single output?

A: Yes. Some national performance measures require multiple outcomes.

Q: The Notices says we are to send our evidence documents to a CNCS e-mail address. Is this correct?

A: No. Please submit all evidence and additional documents to Cassandra.L.Argo@wv.gov. The Commission will submit all documents to CNCS on the recommended applicants' behalf.

Q: When is the next TA Call?

A: The next TA Call is scheduled for December 8th at 8:30 am. Participants may dial 866-453-5550 then enter pin 3730200# at the prompt to join.

Q: When is the deadline for the new applicants to submit the full application in eGrants?

A: New applicants must submit the full application in eGrants by 5 pm on December 13th.

Q: When is the deadline for re-competing applicants to submit the full application in eGrants?

A: Re-competing applicants must submit the full application in eGrants by 5 pm on December 13th.

Q: When is the deadline for continuation applicants to submit the full application in eGrants?

A: Continuation applicants must submit the full application in eGrants by 5 pm on January 2nd.

Q: When will we receive feedback and clarifications on the initial application?

A: Commission staff will review the applications between the 14th and 19th then will provide written feedback to applicants who scored an 80 or higher by 5 pm on December 20th.

Q: What is the deadline for resubmitting the revised application for the external peer review?

A: Applicants who receive feedback will need to submit the revised application in eGrants by 12 pm on December 29th. The revised application will then be reviewed by external peer reviewers.

Q: What happens after the peer review?

A: Applicants who receive a score of 80 or higher will be provided final clarifications with revisions finalized between January 9th - 12th. Applicants must designate a single staff member to facilitate these revisions in a timely manner. Recommended applications will be submitted to CNCS by their January 17th deadline.

Q: When will we be notified of the Corporation's funding decision?

A: The Commission will coordinate official announcements with CNCS, but anticipates making informal announcements by May 15th.

Q: If we are a currently funded formula applicant competing for the first time, what happens if we are not awarded a competitive grant?

A: Currently funded formula applicants who submit a competitive application for the first time and are not selected by the Corporation for competitive funding will have their original, unrevised application transferred to the formula competition and will compete with the other applicants in their category (new, re-compete, or continuation). Applications must receive a score of 80 or higher in the formula application to be recommended for formula funding.

Q: If we are currently funded formula applicant competing for a second time, what happens if we are not awarded a competitive grant?

A: Currently funded formula applicants who submit a competitive application for a second time and are not selected by the Corporation for competitive funding will have their original, unrevised application transferred to the formula competition and will compete with the other applicants in their category (new, re-compete, or continuation). Applications must receive a score of 80 or higher in the formula application to be recommended for formula funding.



WV State AmeriCorps Competitive Grant

Technical Assistance Call FAQ

November 9, 2017

Q: We are a currently funded formula program in a continuation year. Does it make sense for us to apply under competitive this year or should we wait until the end of our current formula cycle?

A: Volunteer West Virginia believes that additional feedback is always beneficial to programs; therefore, we recommend that interested formula programs submit a competitive application. Please keep in mind that the Commission will use the originally submitted application (the application submitted before peer and staff reviews) as the program's formula application.

Q: If we want to create our own applicant determined performance measure, what should we keep in mind?

A: All performance measures must be aligned. To learn more about this requirement, please review the information on page 3 of the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#). Also, any applicant determined performance measure must demonstrate that it is significantly different than any CNCS national performance measure. When creating an applicant determined performance measure, please review your measure against the Performance Measure Checklist - Appendix B in the [Performance Measure Instructions](#).

Q: What score does my application need to receive in order to be recommended to the national competition?

A: Volunteer West Virginia will not recommend applicants who have an average score of 79 or lower on BOTH the peer review and staff review

Q: When is the deadline for my full competitive application?

A: The deadline for the full competitive application to be submitted via eGrants for new and re-competing applicants is 5 pm on December 13, 2017. The deadline for the full competitive application to be submitted via eGrants for continuation applicants is 5 pm on January 2, 2018.

Q: Do the 20 required members all need to be full-time members or can we have a variety of member slots?

A: Applicants can have a variety of member slot types as long as they meet the minimum number of 20 total slots.

Q: We are a newly funded formula applicant in the first year of funding. Should we consider applying to the national competition?

A: No. Volunteer West Virginia requires all new programs to complete a full three-year formula cycle before applying to the national competition.

Q: Will successful applicants be notified on Monday, May 14th or Tuesday, May 15th? The release states Monday, May 15th.

A: Applicants will be notified of their grants status on Tuesday, May 15th.

Q: If we are interested in applying for the alternative match waiver, do we submit our original budget at our required match level or at the level we are requesting with the alternative match waiver?

A: Applicants must submit the original application with the required level of match. If the applicant's grant is funded and the alternative match waiver is approved, an amendment to the grant will be opened so the applicant can adjust the budget accordingly.

Q: We are a new organization interested in applying for AmeriCorps funding. Are we eligible to apply under the national competition?

A: No. The national competition is only open to currently funded competitive or formula programs. New organizations are encouraged to apply to the formula grants process which will kick-off in late January or early February.

Q: Will the technical assistance call be on Friday the 10th or Thursday the 9th?

A: The first technical assistance call will be on Thursday, November 9th.

Q: How do I know if our evaluation meets CNCS Requirements?

A: Applicants can review the evaluation section of the [NOFO](#) (page 18), the [Mandatory Supplemental Guidance](#), the [Evidence Checklist](#), and the [CNCS Evaluation Resources](#) webpage for additional information.

Q: On November 1, 2017, I tried to open a renewal application in eGrants, but received a message that no applications were in a continuable state. What do I do?

A: The program year 2018 grant was not open to sub-applications until approximately 10 am on 11/1/2017. If applicants logged into eGrants prior to this date and time then they most likely received an error message; however, now that the application is open, applicants should have no trouble beginning their applications. If you do encounter any eGrants issues, please e-mail Cassandra.L.Argo@wv.gov for assistance.

Q: What is the difference between competitive and formula?

A: The main differences are: 1) competitive applicants compete against all national applications while formula applicants only compete against West Virginia applications and 2) CNCS makes the funding determinations for competitive while Volunteer West Virginia makes the funding determinations for formula. All other requirements, timelines, and reports are the same.

Q: Can our new application have a start date prior to our current program's end date? We would like to better align our program with the school calendar.

A: Program enrollment periods cannot overlap; however, programs may change their current grant's enrollment end date to allow an earlier enrollment start date for the new grant application.

Q: If we are currently funded formula program and decide not to apply competitively, what do we need to do?

A: Formula programs can simply e-mail Cassandra.L.Argo@wv.gov to let the Commission know that you will not be applying competitively this year.

Q: Do we need to enter narrative in Section D like in years past?

A: This year, applicants only need to enter the words "See Budget" in this section. The information included should be used by applicants to check the accuracy of their Budget Narrative before submission in eGrants.

Q: In the past, we have placed our narrative sources at the end of the document, so the important narrative pieces stay within the page limit. Is this still acceptable?

A: Programs need to make this decision for themselves; however, they should keep in mind that sources are required for all evidence included in the application. Evidence without sources within the page limit may not be reviewed or scored.

Q: Our Healthy Futures focus does not align with the PY 2018 Funding Priorities. What does this mean?

A: Healthy Futures is still a focus area for the Corporation; however, the Healthy Future Funding Priority has been narrowed to the reduction and prevention of prescription drug and opioid abuse. Your program may move forward with your current program design. You would, however, not be able to select Healthy Futures as a Funding Priority in your application since your current design does not meet the new definition.

Q: Does changing the Enrollment Period affect our currently enrolled members?

A: No. It only changes the timeframe the program can enroll members.

Q: Where do I look for my continuation application?

A: Select Continuation/Renewal under the Creating an Application heading on your organization's eGrants homepage (see image below).



If you are unable to find the application from this link, please select View All under View My Grants/Applications on your organization's eGrants home page, search for your grant number, and select the correct application to edit (see image below).



If still can't find the correct application, please contact the help desk by submitting a help ticket from the eGrants website or call 1-800-942-2677 for assistance.

Q: We are a currently funded formula applicant who is applying under the competitive grants process for the first time. Do we use the same eGrants site, account, and log-in information?

A: Yes. You will use the same eGrants site, account, and log-in information to submit a competitive grant application.

Q: We are a currently funded formula applicant who is applying under the competitive grants process for the first time, so do we select New or Continuation?

A: As a first time competitive grant applicant, you will select New; however, your match level will remain on the same schedule. For instance, if you were a 3rd year formula applicant, your match level for your new competitive application will advance to the year 4 level of 26%.

Q: Am I correct in believing that the evidence only needs to address a single aspect of our program's intervention and not each intervention?

A: You are correct. Applicants are only required to provide evidence for a single intervention outlined in the application.

Q: What is the CNCS definition of a federally approved indirect cost rate?

A: A negotiated indirect cost rate received from the Nonfederal entity's cognizant agency for indirect costs. CNCS has provided this [Indirect Cost Rate FAQ](#) as well as details on how to budget using a federally approved indirect cost rate on pages 31-32 of the [Application Instructions](#).

Q: If we cannot submit the application by the deadline, how do we request an extension?

A: Applicants who need to request an extension must submit an e-mail to Cassandra.L.Argo@wv.gov no later than the day before the deadline. The e-mail must include a detailed description of the extenuating circumstances that are preventing the delayed submission.

Q: Where do I find the funding priorities?

A: The funding priorities can be found on page 3 of the [NOFO](#) as well as in the [Mandatory Supplemental Guidance](#).

Q: Can we continue to submit questions to Cassandra.L.Argo@wv.gov throughout this week?

A: Yes. Questions will continue to be accepted via e-mail through the application deadline. All questions will be addressed in written form, distributed to all applicants, and posted at www.volunteerwv.org.

Q: As a first-time competitive applicant who is currently funded in the formula portfolio, will our match level reset to 24%?

A: No, your match level will remain on the same schedule. For instance, if you were a 3rd year formula applicant, your match level for your new competitive application will advance to the year 4 level of 26%.

Q: If we are approved for the alternative match waiver, is it a permanent approval or will we have to reapply every year?

A: Programs will have to reapply for the alternative match waiver each year.

Q: Is it possible to request an alternative match waiver level higher than 35%?

A: Yes. Programs may request an alternative match waiver level higher than 35%.