

## **VWV Competitive Grants Process FAQs**

**December 5, 2018- December 11, 2018**

**In the detail instructions / definitions it says to count as "organizations" non-profit and local/state gov't. Does that mean we cannot count our federal gov't sites as organizations? Can we still count all of our members as contributing to capacity building (including those at federal sites) but we just don't count those sites in our target numbers? What if the members contribute for a part of their time to associated organizations such as friends groups, that are not their assigned site but are part of the service duties?**

(We are working to provide an answer to this question. For now, please count all sites.)

**What is the best method to select research studies for the evidence base section in the grant application?**

- You can provide up to two research studies that CNCS will review as part of your evidence base.
- The only types of research studies that will be reviewed and counted are studies that closely match your program.
- Studies that do not meet qualifications for evidence section can be referenced in Theory of Change. You can also use your own program's statistics or data from a community partner in this section.
- If you are using a research study with an intervention doesn't match the characteristics explained in the NOFO, make sure to explicitly state why the intervention is relevant by writing a sentence for each of the five bullet points listed below.
- The following areas must match the research studies:
  - Characteristics of the beneficiary population
  - Characteristics of the population delivering the information
  - Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
  - The context in which the intervention is delivered
  - Outcomes of the evaluation
- Please see p. 14, Evidence Base of the Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for additional guidance.

**What is allowable for in-kind donations of housing?**

In-kind cannot include housing unless it is necessary for program design. For instance, if your program runs a summer camp which requires overnight stays, lodging for that camp is allowable.

**What rate can I collect for in-kind professional services?**

You can collect the individuals professional hourly service rate, including specialist rates for attorneys, auditors, land management professionals, etc. As long as that person isn't paid from another federal source, given proper documentation. The services would need to be approved in your budget and allowable expenses for your CNCS grant.

**Is the CNCS required evaluation a required document that we attach to our application? Specifically, would that be our external evaluator report?**

Yes, you will submit your external evaluator report using the guidance below, which was obtained from the NOFO and Application Instructions

*p. 8, VII. Documents of the Application Instructions:*

After you have submitted the documents via the guidance in the Notice, change the status in eGrants from the default “Not Sent” to the applicable status “Sent,” “Not Applicable,” or “Already on File at CNCS.”

A. Evaluation: Submit any completed report as described in F., below. Select Evaluation and select “Sent” once you have submitted a completed evaluation report. If an evaluation is required, you must submit a copy at the time of application even if Volunteer West Virginia or CNCS may already have it on file.

F. Submission Instructions for Evaluations, Labor Union Concurrence, Other Required Documents, and Explanation of Federal Debt Delinquency, as applicable. Please submit the required documents to the email listed in the Notice using the naming convention and other instructions found there. This information must be received by Volunteer West Virginia by the deadline in the notice.

*p. 12, Submission of Additional Documents of the Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity:*

Additional Documents must be emailed to [AmeriCorps@wv.gov](mailto:AmeriCorps@wv.gov) with the labels outlined below. Emails should include the following information:

- Subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]– [Application ID number]
- Body of the email should identify:
  - The legal applicant name and its point of contact information
  - The application ID number
  - A list of documents that should be attached to the email
- Attachments to emails should include
  - Individually saved files that are clearly labeled
  - Each file should also include a header or title

**I believe only one grant characteristic applies to us and that is Geographic Focus-Rural.**

In the Grant Characteristics section, the instructions state to check any characteristic that is a significant part of the program. It is up to the program to determine which characteristics apply.

**Can you clarify the meaning of Professional Corps in the next set of answers you post?**

Please see the definition for Professional Corps below. This can be found on pg. 7, Professional Corps of the Supplemental Guidance. Volunteer West Virginia does not currently have a Professional Corps program in our national service portfolio.

Professional Corps: A Professional Corps is a program model composed of AmeriCorps members serving as professionals; i.e. teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, attorneys, or other professionals. The programs recruit and place qualified members in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Professional Corps members' salaries/compensation, including childcare, are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS. In order to be considered for funding, applicants must demonstrate that there are an inadequate number of professionals in the community(ies) where the program seeks to place members. These grants are fixed price grants.

**On page 10 of the instructions, it says the use of non-CNCS federal funds as match is permitted, provided we discuss our intention with the other agency prior to submitting our application. Do we need to also discuss it with Volunteer WV, or if the other agency says it's okay, can we just include them as a Source of Match? What if we are awarded additional federal funds after submitting the application? Is there a process to revise our source of match to potentially include them?**

You do not have to discuss it with Volunteer West Virginia, but you must submit a letter from the other Federal Agency that gives you permission to use their funds as match for AmeriCorps. A copy of the letter must be kept by the program as part of the grant file and an updated approval letter has to be submitted to Volunteer West Virginia at the beginning of each program year.

If additional federal funds were awarded after start of program year, the same documents are required. The source of match in the application would not need to be corrected. However, federal funds used as match must be reported in WV's Federal Financial Report. Any federal funds claimed in monthly reimbursements must be flagged in the PER submission in OnCorps so that Volunteer West Virginia staff can identify the amounts used.

**Can we include cost for scholarships to K-12 and post-secondary students in the budget under Other Program Operating Costs? We are proposing CrossFit strength training scholarships for the K-12 students and merit scholarships for the post-secondary students. All the students would be enrolled in our AmeriCorps member supported evidence-informed interventions, and we believe the scholarships would contribute to an improvement in their academic engagement.**

Registration fees may be an allowable expense if proper justification is provided. All costs must be justified and related to your prescribed intervention.

**I noticed when I put our budget into eGrants it shows our match is back up to 50%. Do I need to send you the waiver information again or will you use what I sent you when we submitted the original grant request?**

Please send it again when you submit your application.

**How can we measure food security for a community using H12 when we know that individuals need access to food more than once?**

Guidance for H12 Outcome: May be able to count number of individuals who are fed daily to show access. Performance measure definitions include the words “access at all times” which may be defined to include daily access.

**What if we only use one performance measure but we want to collect other information?**

Programs can collect data on additional performance measure throughout the year and compare with current aligned performance measure. If the performance measures that were tested show better data than the current aligned measure, a program may choose to change the measure or add a measure in a subsequent year.

**Where can we get ideas about evidence?**

Programs can benefit from reviewing grant applications submitted by programs with similar program models, focus area(s) and research studies, including national programs operating out of state.