

Volunteer Generation Fund

Request for Proposals – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



1. How does this program differ from the AmeriCorps model?

This program has a mandatory “capacity building” focus; in AmeriCorps, capacity building is optional. These volunteers will be leveraged to increase the capacity of local non-profits while servicing needs in the community. The volunteers recruited through the Volunteer Generation Fund will not be national service participants, who in most cases receive a living allowance and other covered benefits (e.g. health insurance) and receive an education award at the completion of service.

2. Are we able to recruit volunteers for our own organization in addition to our partner organizations?

Yes, volunteers recruited can be used to build capacity at the grantee’s agency as long as the performance measure for capacity building is being met. However, the intent of the program is to build capacity not only in your own organization but also in the partner organizations you identify. Section 2.1 of the RFP states: “All VGF-funded programs in New York are expected to build volunteer management capacity within organizations and, must commit to providing support and mentoring to at least three smaller, less resourced partner organizations in the areas of recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers.” It is permissible within the program design to utilize the recruited volunteers to build capacity in the grantee organization as well as in the partners but it should be noted that building capacity in partner organizations is a specific deliverable of our new VGF model for every grantee.

3. On page 5, it states the subgrantee will recruit/place 300 volunteers with anti-hunger organizations throughout the state each year, but then on page 18 under section B it states “funded organizations... recruit a minimum of 80 volunteers” could you clarify the difference and which number is accurate—300 or 80?

80. There is an overall statewide target of 300 recruited volunteers for anti-hunger initiatives and an overall statewide target of 300 recruited volunteers for anti-homelessness initiatives. The Commission has set a minimum target of 80 recruited volunteers for each funded program/ subgrantee. It should be noted that these volunteers cannot be “episodic” or “occasional” volunteers; the 80 volunteers should serve, on average, a minimum of two hours per week for at least six months.

4. As a current RVC, I was curious about the websites that are in place. On page 18 Section A it mentions the NYS Volunteer Management System—is that the current website? If so, will other non-profit organizations be able to continue to post non hunger/homelessness/poverty volunteer opportunities as they are doing now, or will the entire website be overhauled?

We cannot address questions in this forum that are outside the scope of this RFP and the 2015 program. Who can use the current system in place, if at all, and for what purposes, will be addressed at a later date with our grantees. Following the announcement of awards for the 2015 program, we will be in contact with those grantees about how to access and use the volunteer management system.

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5. Can an applicant propose to focus on more than one issue (hunger AND homelessness) or must an applicant choose one focus area?

No. The program design requires that an applicant choose a single issue area of focus. , Section 2.1 of the RFP states “Applicants must identify an issue area of focus.”

6. Is it possible to be both an applicant and a partner?

No. Partner organizations cannot be direct grantees under this program. Section 2.1 of the RFP defines the distinctions between applicants/grantees and partners, and states that while partner organizations “will not be directly funded through the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF), [they] will reap widespread benefits in terms of increased organizational, staff, and volunteer management capacities.”