

NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDING AVAILABLE
OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service

Funding Opportunity Title: Learn and Serve America 2008 Higher Education College Student Social Media Initiative

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

CFDA Number: 94.005

Dates: Applications are due 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 7, 2008

Funding Opportunity Description:

The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) announces the availability of approximately \$2.3 million of grant funding to support the facilitation of better engagement of college students in service through social media. The Corporation's mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Learn and Serve America Higher Education grants are designed to expand participation in community service by supporting community service programs carried out through institutions of higher education, acting as civic institutions helping to meet the educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs of the communities in which they operate.

The purpose of this competition is to facilitate better engagement of college students in service through the use of social media. Some examples of social media include: social networking (i.e., Facebook, MySpace, Ning, or integrating social networking capacity into existing sites), wikis, podcasts, blogs, RSS feeds, mashups, social bookmarking, widgets, etc. Successful applicants must demonstrate how their program can use these tools to engage increased numbers of college students, especially in partnership with other nonprofit or for-profit entities.

The Corporation will make one-time awards of approximately \$100,000 to \$750,000 to an estimated twelve eligible applicants for a project period of up to three years. While all applicants can build in funds for subgrants as part of their program model, the Corporation expects to fund at least one partnership dedicated primarily to disbursing small subgrants (under \$10,000 each) to seed student-driven projects. This awardee must promote, review, and award subgrants using social media. Under this model, it is expected that the grantee will allocate at least 80% of funding for subgrants.

Eligible applicants include higher education partnerships, defined as one or more public or private nonprofit organizations, or public agencies, including States, and one or more institutions of higher education. Thus, all partnerships must include at least one institution of higher education. Examples of such partnerships include: a national service-focused organization and colleges and universities where it has affiliated chapters; a national non-profit partnering with a Business School to run a national subgranting competition; a regional group of non-profit student organizations working with an institution of higher education which would serve as the legal applicant. Applicants should have demonstrable experience in planning and implementing significant service, volunteering or technology programs.

Applicants should refer to the Application Instructions available at:
http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Program Description

For more than a decade, the Corporation for National and Community Service—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve programs—has mobilized a new generation of engaged citizens. This year, more than 1.8 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve through these programs. They will help thousands of national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas.

The Corporation’s mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

Learn and Serve America Higher Education grants are designed to expand participation in community service by supporting community service programs carried out through institutions of higher education, acting as civic institutions helping to meet the educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs of the communities in which they operate.

Description of Competition

The purpose of this competition is to facilitate better engagement of college students in service through the use of social media. Some examples of social media include: social networking (i.e., Facebook, MySpace, Ning, or integrating social networking capacity into existing sites), wikis, podcasts, blogs, RSS feeds, mashups, social bookmarking, widgets, etc. Successful applicants must demonstrate how their program can use these tools to engage increased numbers of college students, especially in partnership with other nonprofit or for-profit entities.

To meet the purpose of this grant, activities must use social media to mobilize and engage students locally, regionally, or nationally in high-quality service and should achieve at least one of the following:

- Improve communication among students, student organizations, community partners, and non-profits/institutions of higher education involved in creating social change
- Develop innovative and effective methods of providing service to or serving with community partners
- Increase institutional support for student-driven service

Grantees’ success will be measured by the way in which they:

- Develop and test innovative ideas
- Develop effective marketing and communication strategies to mobilize student volunteers
- Develop means of connecting more students to service

In addition to the quality of their proposed project plan and activities, grant applicants will be assessed on how well they:

- Use or adapt social media in an innovative way to drive student service
- Actively involve students in the grant planning process
- Include student leadership during the grant implementation
- Incorporate pre-existing technology and expertise on issue areas (e.g., education, public safety, environment, and other human needs)
- Promote Learn and Serve/CNCS through co-branding strategies

If you choose to apply for funding, please refer to the application instructions, which provide thorough guidance for composing application narratives and budgets (to view the application instructions, please see http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp).

B. Authority

The Learn and Serve America Higher-Education programs are authorized by Title I subtitle B, Part II of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, 42#U.S.C. 12561. Funds for this grant competition are available under authority provided by Public Law 110-161, the Consolidated Appropriations Act (2008).

C. Applicable Regulations

Applicable regulations include the Learn and Serve America Higher Education regulations, 45#CFR Part 2515-2519 and the uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations, 45 CFR Part 2543.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Number of Awards and Award Amount

The Corporation will make one-time awards of approximately \$100,000 to \$750,000 to an estimated twelve eligible applicants for a project period of up to three years. While all applicants can build in funds for subgrants as part of their program model, the Corporation expects to fund at least one partnership dedicated primarily to disbursing small subgrants (under \$10,000 each) to seed student-driven projects. This awardee must promote, review, and award subgrants using social media. Under this model, it is expected that the grantee will allocate at least 80% of funding for subgrants.

The Corporation is not bound by any estimate in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not obligate the Corporation to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funds available, or any part thereof, for grants under Learn and Serve America.

Learn and Serve America anticipates making funding announcements by late July 2008, and making grant awards in September 2008.

B. Project/Award Period

The successful applicant will have up to three years to implement the project.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include higher education partnerships, defined as one or more public or private nonprofit organizations, or public agencies, including States, and one or more institutions of higher education. Thus, all partnerships must include at least one institution of higher education. Examples of such partnerships include: a national service-focused organization and colleges and universities where it has affiliated chapters; a national non-profit partnering with a Business School to run a national subgranting competition; a regional group of non-profit student organizations working with an institution of higher education which would serve as the legal applicant. Applicants should have demonstrable experience in planning and implementing significant service, volunteering or technology programs.

B. Match Requirements

Grantees must contribute at least 50 percent of the total cost of the proposed program. The total cost of a program is Grantee share + Corporation share. The grantee's share of the program cost can be in cash or in-kind, which may include facilities, equipment, or services. The grantee's share may come from private, state, or non-Corporation federal sources. In the case of federal sources, the funds of another agency may be used as match only if the other agency permits such use.

C. Other Eligibility Requirements

Lobbying: Any organization described in Section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

Multiple Submissions: Each 'Legal Applicant' can submit only one application for this grant competition.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application instructions and copies of this *Notice* can be obtained by contacting Learn and Serve America at 202-606-7510 or lsahighered@cns.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Applications must be submitted using eGrants, the Corporation's integrated, secure, web-based system for grant application and management. To create and submit an application via eGrants, please visit: <http://www.learnandserve.gov/egrants>.

For the purposes of this grant competition, we have condensed the Learn and Serve America Higher Education Application Instructions (OMB Control #: 3045-0046). All the guidance necessary to complete an application is included within this *Notice* and in the guidance document available at http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp. Your completed application will consist of the following components:

1. Standard Form 424 Facesheet
2. Applicant/Application Information
3. Program Design Narratives
4. Detailed Budget
5. Signed Certifications and Assurances

C. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for submission of applications is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 7, 2008.

All Applicants must attempt to submit applications via eGrants. In the event of any prolonged unavailability of the eGrants system on the date of submission, the Corporation reserves the right to extend the eGrants submission deadline. Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

D. Intergovernmental Review

This program is NOT subject to Executive Order 12372.

E. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21,

A-122, A-87, and/or FAR 31.2. Applicants should consult the appropriate OMB Cost Principles and/or FAR in preparing their applications. Links to these documents can be found at www.omb.gov.

Administrative Costs. For any fiscal year, grantees and subgrantees collectively may spend no more than 5 percent of the total grant funds on *administrative* costs (see definition of administrative costs in the budget instructions).

Payments to Participants. Minor expenses for identification of Learn and Serve America participants or recognition of outstanding service are allowable. However, grantees may not provide stipends, allowances, or other financial support to any program participant (excluding teachers) except as reimbursement for transportation, meals, and other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses directly related to program participation.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Equal Opportunity Survey: Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. You may complete the survey in eGrants while preparing your application for submission or contact the Corporation (Section VII., below) to obtain a copy.

Universal Identifier: Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. **The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number.**

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com. The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, **we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date.** Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by telephone at a cost of \$99 by calling the DUNS number request line. **Applications without DUNS numbers or with invalid DUNS numbers are subject to potential rejection.**

Using eGrants:

- We suggest you first prepare and save your application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants.
- **We strongly encourage you to create your eGrants account and begin your application at least three weeks prior to the final submission deadline and begin pasting your application into eGrants no later than ten days before the deadline.** This will allow you time to address technical issues prior to the deadline. Technical issues are more likely to be considered as a factor in allowing a late submission if you begin entering your application within this time frame.
- Use only UPPERCASE letters for all section headings and other information you would like to highlight in your narrative. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into eGrants.
- Adhere to all the character limits indicated in the application instructions. Characters include all the letters, punctuation, and spaces in your document.
- Do not submit any other supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in the application instructions. We will not review or return them.

Technical Difficulties with eGrants: Contact the eGrants Help Desk at 202-606-7506 or e-mail

egrantshelp@cns.gov immediately if a problem arises while you are creating your account, preparing, or submitting your application. If you think you may be unable to submit your application by the deadline due to technical issues, contact the eGrants Help Desk prior to the 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time deadline to explain your technical issue and get a ticket number. If your issue is not resolved within the next 24 hours, you will be asked to submit a hard copy application according to the directions below.

If you are unable to access eGrants at all, please submit a hard copy application and a copy of your application on disk or CD. Submit these items via overnight carrier (non-U.S. Postal Service because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service) or hand delivery. Your hard copy application must be received within two business days (May 9, 2008) of the published deadline by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please make sure your overnight carrier stamps the package with the date and time it was sent. Submit required information to: Corporation for National and Community Service, Learn and Serve Higher Education Grants, 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20525.

The paper application must be typed and double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins. Please adhere to the character limits listed in the application instructions and number the pages. Submit one unbound, single-sided original paper application. The electronic version on disk or CD must be an exact duplicate of the paper original and will be used to copy and paste your application information into eGrants. If there are differences between the paper application and the disk or CD, we will use the disk or CD version.

In the event of prolonged unavailability of the eGrants system on the date of submission, the Corporation reserves the right to extend the eGrants submissions deadline. A notice will be placed in eGrants and on http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp with the extended deadline.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Criteria

In reviewing the merits of an application, the Corporation evaluates the quality, innovation, replicability and sustainability of the proposal as defined in the Learn and Serve regulations 45 CFR §2519.500 (How does the Corporation review an application?) accessible at: http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf

The successful applicant(s) will be selected based on the degree to which they address initiatives and priorities described in this *Notice* and the associated application guidance found on the Learn and Serve website: http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp

In addition to the quality of their proposed project plan and activities, grant applicants will be assessed on how well they:

- Use or adapt social media in an innovative way to drive student service
- Actively involve students in the grant planning process
- Include student leadership during the grant implementation
- Incorporate pre-existing technology and expertise on issue areas (e.g., education, public safety, environment, and other human needs)
- Promote Learn and Serve/CNCS through co-branding strategies

The sections are weighted as follows: Program Design – 60%, Organizational Capacity – 25% and Budget/Cost Effectiveness – 15%.

B. Review and Selection Process

Learn and Serve America typically receives far more high-quality applications than can be awarded. A multi-stage review process determines which proposals should be funded and includes recommendations by Corporation staff. Grant approvals are made by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

Reviewers will evaluate all proposals using the selection criteria as indicated above to determine which applicants best responded to the priorities described in this *Notice* and the associated guidance. The review process may use outside experts, including representatives from educational and youth service organizations, community service practitioners, administrators, and former national service participants, to evaluate the quality of applications.

Corporation staff members review the most highly rated proposals according to statutory and programmatic priorities using the selection criteria. After evaluating the overall quality of each proposal, and its responsiveness to the Corporation's priority areas, Learn and Serve America staff will take into consideration whether applicants are geographically diverse, including projects in both urban and rural areas. The staff may conduct interviews in person or through conference calls prior to recommending a program for approval. This process determines which applications Learn and Serve America staff will recommend for funding to the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

We anticipate announcing the results of the 2008 competition by late July 2008. Selected applicants are approved to negotiate with the Corporation for a grant award. During the negotiation period, you must satisfactorily resolve any questions or issues identified during the review of your application before the Corporation will award your grant.

Corporation program officers may call applicants to seek clarification as part of the review process. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Learn and Serve regulations and other specific conditions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant.

Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements.

As with all federal grant programs, it is the responsibility of all programs funded by Learn and Serve America to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. Under our regulations, all programs must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, complete, and current disclosure of financial information. To meet this requirement, programs must have adequate accounting practices and procedures, internal controls, audit trails, and cost allocation procedures.

A grantee organization that expends \$500,000 or more of total federal awards in a fiscal year is required to obtain a single audit for that year conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with the Single Audit Act, as amended, 31 U.S.C. sec. 7501, et seq., and OMB Circular A-133. If the grantee expends federal awards under only one federal program, it may elect to have a program specific audit, if it is otherwise eligible. A grantee that does not expend \$500,000 in federal awards is exempt from the single

audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133 for that year. However, it must continue to conduct financial management reviews of its programs, and records must be available for review and audit.

A recipient of a federal grant award (pass-through entity) is required in accordance with paragraph 400(d) of OMB Circular A-133 to do the following with regard to its subrecipients: 1) identify the federal award and funding source; 2) advise subrecipients of all requirements imposed on them; 3) monitor subrecipient activities and compliance; 4) ensure that subrecipients have A-133 audits when required; 5) issue decisions and ensure follow-up on audit findings in a timely way; 6) where necessary, adjust its own records and financial statements based on audits; and 7) require subrecipients to permit access by the pass-through entity and auditors to records and financial statements as necessary for the pass-through entity to comply with A-133.

Learn and Serve America grantees must assure that their programs or activities, including those of any subgrantees, will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. Grantees must assure that they will obtain assurances of such compliance prior to extending federal financial assistance to subgrantees. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving service members under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

By federal statute and regulation, a person, including participants, service recipients, or program staff, may not, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability (for otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities), or in most cases religion, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination, directly or through contractual arrangements, under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. By Corporation policy, participation in the Corporation's programs and projects will be based on merit and equal opportunity for all, without regard to factors such as sexual orientation, marital or parental status, military service, or religious, community, or social affiliations, in addition to the statutory grounds.

Monitoring Responsibilities. Grantees are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the grant and subgrant-supported activities to ensure compliance with applicable federal requirements and achievement of performance goals.

C. Reporting

Grantees must submit biannual performance and financial reports. A final report is required at the end of the grant period. All grantees must also complete, or ensure that their subgrantees complete, the annual Learn and Serve America Program and Performance Survey which captures site-level performance data.

VII. Agency Contacts

This *Notice* is available at http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The TTY number is 202-606-3472. Application instructions and copies of this *Notice* can be obtained by contacting Learn and Serve America at 202-606-7510 or lsahighered@cns.gov.

VIII. Additional Information

Technical Assistance: Learn and Serve America hosts a series of technical assistance calls to answer applicant questions about funding opportunities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in the technical assistance calls. The call schedule will be posted at http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp.

Disclaimer: Publication of this announcement does not obligate the Corporation to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funds available, or any part thereof, for grants under the Learn and Serve America Program.

Annual Grantee Meeting. Grantees must attend the annual Learn and Serve America Grantee training meeting. The program budget must include costs associated with attendance which may be covered by grant funds.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service: The Corporation is charged by Congress to promote service on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, the third Monday in January, helping to make it “A Day on, Not a Day Off.” All Learn and Serve America grantees/subgrantees are expected to include information about Dr. King as part of their projects and to take part in a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service project. A toolkit and other resources are available at www.mlkday.gov.

Program Information for Participants: Grantees must provide information to all Learn and Serve America participants concerning: (1) their participation in Learn and Serve America and its purposes, (2) other Corporation programs, (3) local volunteer centers, and (4) and the President’s Volunteer Service Awards.

Ownership and Sharing of Grant Products

a. Ownership. Unless otherwise specified, the Grantee owns and may copyright any work that is subject to copyright, including software designs, training manuals, curricula, videotapes, and other products produced under the grant. However, the Grantee may not sell any work that includes a Learn and Serve America logo without prior Corporation written approval.

b. Corporation use. The Corporation retains royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable licenses to obtain, use, reproduce, publish, or disseminate products, including data, produced under the grant and to authorize others to do so. The Corporation may distribute such products through a designated clearinghouse.

c. Sharing grant products. To the extent practical, the Grantee agrees to make products produced under the subgrant available at the cost of reproduction to others in the field.