# NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service

Funding Opportunity Title: Volunteer Organization Capacity Building

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

**CFDA No.:** 94.007

Dates: Deadline March 10, 2008 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Funding Opportunity Description:** The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) announces the availability of approximately \$5,000,000 for the first year of a three year cooperative agreement to strengthen our nation's volunteer infrastructure and increase the number of Americans who engage in quality volunteer activities. Funding for years two and three of the agreement is contingent upon the availability of funds and the recipient's satisfactory progress towards agreed-upon objectives.

The Corporation expects to make a federal financial assistance award to a national nonprofit organization with the demonstrated capacity to provide financial and technical resources to local organizations that identify, place, and support volunteers engaged in addressing critical community needs. A portion of the funds provided under this agreement must be provided on an annual basis to such local organizations through a subgrant process.

This assistance will be awarded and administered under the Corporation's uniform administrative requirements for non-profit organizations (see 45 CFR Part 2543) and OMB's nonprofit cost principles (see 2 CFR Part 230; OMB circular A-122).

**Eligibility:** The competition is open to national non-profit organizations that have established networks of affiliated organizations with proven track records and the capacity to identify, place, and support volunteers.

Submission Dates and Times: Please submit an e-mail stating your intent to apply to VolCapBuild@cns.gov by February 20, 2008 by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

The deadline for applications is **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 10, 2008.** Applications submitted by hard copy or fax will not be accepted. This *Notice* contains all application instructions, and is available at <a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp">http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp</a> or by e-mailing VolCapBuild@cns.gov.

Submit applications via e-mail to: VolCapBuild@cns.gov.

# **FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT**

#### I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

# A. Funding Opportunity Description

For more than a decade the Corporation—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve programs—has worked to mobilize new generations of engaged citizens. In 2008, more than 3.8 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will work through Corporation-supported programs to help thousands of national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas.

The Corporation anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement for approximately \$5,000,000 to a national organization to develop and execute a plan to support and build the capacity of local Volunteer Connector Organizations. These organizations connect individuals with volunteer opportunities and support organizations and professional volunteer coordinators in effectively using those volunteers to create meaningful change in local communities.

Activities that will be funded through this competition include, among other activities, those previously supported through a partnership grant. As part of the Corporation's fiscal year 2008 budget Congress appropriated sufficient funds to support first year funding for a competitively awarded grant that would include funding for activities carried out under the previous partnership. The Corporation is looking forward to establishing a strong partnership with an organization committed to advancing the volunteer sector through dynamic leadership and high-quality programming. Additional grant competitions under Subtitle H to support youth programming and better linking of schools to community resources will be announced later in FY 2008.

The successful applicant will, in conjunction with the Corporation, provide financial resources, training, and other assistance to local affiliates/organizations that match individuals with appropriate service opportunities. The applicant will train professional volunteer managers and other nonprofits to deepen the engagement and increase the effectiveness of their volunteers. The Corporation anticipates that the successful applicant will propose a plan, subject to the Corporation's approval, that allows up to approximately 50 percent of funds provided under this agreement to be distributed on an annual basis to such local organizations through a subgrant process.

The Corporation expects to work in close collaboration with the successful applicant to:

- Provide grants to local Volunteer Connector Organizations for operating support, capacity building, and special projects;
- Deliver training and technical assistance to Volunteer Connector and other local organizations (including other Corporation grantees) in such areas as volunteer management, volunteer retention, and local partnership development with an emphasis on distance learning and other cost-effective methods for delivering training and technical assistance;

- Collaborate with other organizations in the sector to streamline and consolidate on-line resources related to volunteer management and national service;
- Develop outreach strategies and conduct a national campaign to get more Americans to volunteer. Strategies should complement the Corporation's Strategic Plan in areas such as encouraging Baby Boomers to serve, engaging more at-risk youth and students in service, and mentoring more at-risk youth;
- Convene and co-design a national conference on volunteerism and service and other national meetings to provide training, inspiration, and networking opportunities for individuals and organizations engaged in community service and volunteerism;
- Provide sector-wide leadership for development and marketing of web-based technologies that encourage creative, efficient electronic means to match volunteers with opportunities and organize service projects; and,
- Build private sector support for volunteering, including the development and promotion of corporate employee volunteer programs and convening and supporting an advisory council of for-profit corporations committed to advancing volunteerism and effecting change in the communities across the nation.

Applicants should propose a three-year plan that is compatible with the Corporation's strategic interests in the area of generating and managing volunteers.

# **B.** Performance Measures and Accountability

The successful applicant will propose yearly performance measures and targets that address at least the following issues:

#### 1. Volunteer Infrastructure

Research has shown that volunteer retention is a significant issue that can be addressed by increasing the quality of volunteer activities and support given to the volunteers. Applicants must demonstrate that they have access to or relationships with existing Volunteer Connector Organizations and the experience, capacity and knowledge resources needed to strengthen the ability of those organizations to deliver high-quality experiences for their volunteers. Proposed measures could include the number of local organizations to be supported and the scope of that support.

# 2. Volunteer Recruitment/Citizen Engagement

The Corporation is committed in its 5-year strategic plan to identifying and supporting 10 million new volunteers by 2010. The successful applicant should provide realistic strategies and show a demonstrated capacity to identify and support new citizens engaged in meaningful volunteer activities. Proposed measures in this area could include the number of new volunteers recruited yearly through local Volunteer Connector Organizations, and the number of local service projects in a given issue areas.

# 3. Corporate Partnerships

A critical piece of increasing volunteerism and service in America is the involvement of the private sector. Applicants must demonstrate a solid track record of engaging Corporate America in addressing pressing community issues. Performance measures in this area can include indicators such as the number of new corporate partners at the national level, new employee volunteer programs initiated, or trainings delivered to local organizations to support development of community-wide support and active citizen engagement in community problem solving.

# 4. Technology Utilization

The applicant should present or propose solutions to advance the state of electronic support for volunteer matching and volunteer project management and support. Technological solutions should embrace latest advances in self-managed web experiences and provide leadership across the volunteer sector to encourage collaborative, efficient use of technology to advance service and volunteerism. Proposed measures in this area could include number of volunteers matched and projects coordinated through an on-line tool or portal.

# 5. Meetings and Conference Development

Applicants must demonstrate a solid track record of producing national meetings, trainings, and conferences that advance and inspire the volunteer and service movement. Beginning in 2009, the successful applicant will work with the Corporation to co-produce and co-convene an annual national conference on volunteerism and service. The general activities undertaken by the incumbent will include serving as fiduciary agent for the conference, handling all contracting with vendors, producing the website and publications, and managing registration process.

Details of the conference partnership will be finalized during the grant negotiation period with the successful applicant, but applicants should anticipate covering any development costs associated with the conference from this award and revenue generated by the event itself. The performance measure in this area could be the projected number of attendees at a national conference on service and volunteerism in each of the next three years.

#### C. Authority

Support for the activities described in this NOFA is authorized under Section 125 of Subtitle C and Section 198 of Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 USC 12575 and 12653, respectively), and under the provision of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 USC 4950, et seq.). Funding for the first year of a cooperative agreement awarded under this *Notice* will be provided from appropriations made available under Public Law 110-161, the Consolidated Appropriations Act (2008).

#### **II.** Award Information

# A. Number of Awards and Award Amount

The Corporation anticipates making one award in the amount of approximately \$5,000,000.

# B. Award Period and Future Funding

The successful applicant will receive a three-year award with funding for the first year of the award. While the Corporation has no obligation to provide funds beyond the initial one-year performance period and award amount, additional funding may be made available pending satisfactory performance, and availability of appropriations for years two and three of this award. Additional funds may also be awarded for initiatives and activities that fall within the scope of this agreement, but that were not funded during the initial award or subsequent continuation awards.

# **C.** Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument is a cooperative agreement, which will allow the successful applicant and the Corporation to advance the volunteer sector through collaborative development of plans and activities.

#### D. Selection Criteria

In awarding this cooperative agreement, the Corporation will consider:

Program Design (35%)
Organizational Capacity (50%)
Budget/Cost Effectiveness (15%)

The Corporation will make all final decisions concerning awards and may require revisions to the grant proposal in order to achieve the objectives under this *Notice*.

## 1. Program Design

The Corporation will consider the quality of the proposed design based on:

- a) The soundness, relevance and creativity of the applicant's 3-year plan;
- b) The applicant's approach to measuring achievement of outcomes and how data collected will be used to modify and improve strategies, products and services; and,
- c) The applicant's approach, expertise and past experience with using technology to advance service and volunteerism.

#### 2. Organizational Capacity

The Corporation will consider the capacity of the applicant to deliver the proposed services based on:

- a) Relationships with or access to networks of Volunteer Connector Organizations for the purposes of delivering training, technical and financial assistance;
- b) Capacity to mobilize volunteers and increase citizen engagement around specific issues or community problems;
- c) Ability to manage a federal grant or apply sound fiscal management principles to grants, as evidenced by previous grants experience;
- d) Ability to provide training and technical assistance services nationwide as evidenced by proposed plans for staffing, partnerships, and technology and by previous experience relevant to the programs to be served;
- e) Experience and track record of engaging the private sector in solving pressing community need; and

f) Demonstrated ability to organize and promote a national conference.

# 3. Budget/Cost Effectiveness

The Corporation will consider the budget based on:

- a) Cost-effectiveness of the proposed training and technical assistance activities in relation to the scope of the services proposed (i.e., the number of participants and proposed activities); and
- b) The clarity and completeness of the budget and budget narrative.

# **III. Eligibility Information**

## A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are national nonprofit organizations (national intermediaries, associations, alliances, consortia, and networks) and national public charities, faith-based and other community organizations, and national private foundations.

For the purposes of this competition a national non-profit organization is defined as a non-profit that has on-going, demonstrable relationships with volunteer connector organizations in at least one state in each of the five clusters of the country used by the Corporation to organize its field operations. The clusters are: 1)Pacific (AK, CA, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY), 2) Atlantic (NJ, MD, DE, CY, DC, RI, MA, PA, PR, NY, MN, MT, NH), 3) North Central (IL, IN, IO, MI, MN, NB, OH, SD, ND, WI), 4)Southern (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV), and 5)Southwest (AZ, AR, CO, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX).

We expect the successful applicant will have well-developed relationships and networks in the volunteer sector. Applicants must also be able to develop a program that can serve as a national model for capacity-building for volunteer organizations.

## **B.** Cost Sharing or Matching

The Corporation requires a minimum of 30 percent match (must be non-federal, may be cash or in-kind) of the total proposed budget (Corporation and non-Corporation funding) for this competition in the first year, 40 percent in the second year, and 50 percent in the third year.

The Corporation reserves the right to apply a different match percentage than those set out in the previous paragraph for any discrete activity added to the cooperative agreement subsequent to the initial award or continuation award.

#### 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.

**Current Grantees:** A national organization that currently operates a Corporation-funded program or is applying for other Corporation funding is eligible to apply.

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

# A. Address to Request Application Package

This *Notice* contains all application instructions, and is available at <a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp">http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp</a> or by e-mailing <a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp">VolCapBuild@cns.gov</a>.

# B. Content and Form of Application Submission

# 1. Content of Application:

Your application consists of Standard Form 424 and page one only of Standard Form 424A; and a narrative that addresses Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost Effectiveness, and Budget Adequacy. You can find the Standard Forms here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. Please include costs associated with subgrants in the "Other" line item on the 424A. You will create a more detailed budget if you are approved for funding.

Your narrative can be no longer than 20,000 characters (approximately 8 pages), single spaced in a font no smaller than 12 point Times Roman, with one inch margins. Your narrative should provide a well-designed plan with a clear and compelling justification for awarding the requested funds. The narrative will cover the three-year project period for which you are requesting approval. Please address the following elements in your narrative.

# a. Program Design

Describe your approach to addressing the need or problem described in this *Notice*. Your strategy should address the following:

- 1) Goals and Objectives. What are your proposed project's target goals and objectives? What are the expected outcomes and how will you measure them? In describing the strategy, address the following:
- Who is the target population or beneficiaries of this proposed project?
- How is this approach innovative?
- Why will this approach be successful and why is it more promising than other alternative approaches?
- How will the program track the number of new skilled volunteers and identify how many successfully completed their volunteer service?
- **3) Description of Activities.** Please describe in detail the activities of the proposed program and provide a timeline for the activities.

# b. Organizational Capacity

Describe your capacity to implement and manage the proposed program. Your description should address the following:

- 1) Areas of Expertise. Please describe your organization's
  - role as a national leader among volunteer organizations,
  - grantmaking experience and the impact of your grantmaking experience,
  - capacity to conduct national outreach campaigns,

- experience using web-based technologies to meet your goals,
- track record in building private sector support for your efforts, and
- experience convening national conferences and meetings and any relevant evaluation results for these meetings.
- 2) Ability to Provide Program Oversight. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has in managing programs similar to the one proposed in this application. Who are the key staff responsible for program oversight? What past experience does the key staff have in securing previously untapped sources of private funds? Detail the responsibilities of each key staff member.
- 3) Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has in managing grants and cooperative agreements as well as a subgrant process. What is your current organizational budget and what percentage of the budget would this grant represent? How will you ensure that the fiscal management is compliant with Federal requirements? Who are the key staff responsible for fiscal oversight, and what past experience will they bring to program? Detail the responsibilities of each key staff member
- **4) Volunteer Management.** What experience does your organization have supporting organizations in better recruiting and managing volunteers? What capacity does your organization currently have to recruit and manage volunteers?
- 5) Training and Technical Assistance. Describe your plans and your capacity to provide training and technical assistance for this project.
- **6) Data Collection.** Describe your plans and your capacity (current and anticipated) to implement and use self-assessments and continuous improvement systems to provide data and information on the success of the project.

## c. Budget/Cost Effectiveness

- 1) **Budget and Program Design.** Explain how the proposed program budget reflects the program's goals and design.
- 2) Match Sources. Please provide a list of sources for planned match.
- **2. Equal Opportunity Survey:** Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. You can find this Survey at <a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp">http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp</a>.
- **3. Universal Identifier:** Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on the Standard Form 424. 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 <a href="www.dnb.com">www.dnb.com</a>.

The website indicates a 24-hour email 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.

**4. E-mail Submission:** Submit your application as four attachments to an e-mail message addressed to <u>VolCapBuild@cns.gov</u>. Attach the 424, 424A, narrative, and Survey on Equal Opportunity. **All four attachments are required for a valid submission.** 

#### C. Submission Dates and Times

Please submit an e-mail stating your intent to apply to <u>VolCapBuild@cns.gov</u> by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time February 20, 2008.** This is not required, but helps us plan the review of the applications.

The deadline for applications is **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 10, 2008.** Applications submitted by hardcopy or fax will not be accepted.

# **D.** Intergovernmental Review

Applicants under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

## **E. Funding Restrictions**

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable OMB Cost Principles (see 2 CFR part 230; OMB Circulars A-122, A-87 or FAR 31.2 at <a href="www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/">www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/</a>).

## V. Application Review Information

Corporation staff will review all proposals using the selection criteria. During the staff review process, Corporation staff may request supporting documentation from the applicant.

#### VI. Award Administration Information

#### A. Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices

The Corporation anticipates making a single award for this competition but may make more than one award if deemed the best approach to addressing the desired outcomes outlined in this *Notice*. We anticipate announcing selections under this *Notice* by approximately March 21, 2008.

The selected applicant is approved to negotiate with a Corporation for a grant award. During the negotiation period, any issues or questions identified during the review

of your application must be satisfactorily resolved before a grant can be awarded. Upon successful conclusion of grant negotiations, a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be issued.

Awards made under this *Notice* will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. Administration of cooperative agreements to non-profit organizations is controlled by 45 CFR Part 2543.

Cooperative agreements require substantial involvement on the part of the government. Substantial involvement includes frequent and regular communication with and monitoring by the Corporation. The Corporation's cognizant program officer will confer with the award recipient on a regular basis to review service delivery and project status, including work plans, budgets, periodic reports, materials developed, preparation for and implementation of training events, targeting of provider services, and provider effectiveness.

## **B.** Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The applicable regulations and other specific conditions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also incorporates your approved application and budget as part of your binding commitments under this grant.

The award recipient must comply with the following requirements:

#### 1. Access for Persons with Disabilities

All grant recipients will ensure that all training and technical assistance services and resources including web sites are accessible to persons with disabilities, as required by law.

- Notify potential participants that reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request;
- Provide sign language interpreters, special assistance, and documents in alternate formats;
- Use accessible locations for training events;
- Use accessible technology, captioning videos. Avoid non-voice-over formats and, when indicating a telephone number, include a non-voice telephone alternative such as TTY or e-mail.
- Provide materials that are accessible to persons with disabilities, and incorporate into all activities planning for needs of clients without Internet access, by using accessible technology, providing materials in alternate formats upon request.

#### 2. Code of Conduct

Entities that are subject to 45 CFR part 2543 are required to develop and maintain a written code of conduct (See Section 2543.42). The code of conduct must prohibit real and apparent conflicts of interest that may arise among employees. Officers, or agents; prohibits the solicitation and acceptance of gifts or gratuities by your officers, employers and agents for personal benefit in excess of minimal value; and outlines

administrative and disciplinary actions available to remedy violations of such standards. Self-recusal will not eliminate a potential or apparent conflict of interest. At a time designated by and prior to entering into a grant agreement with the Corporation, the applicant will be required to submit a copy of its code of conduct and describe methods it will use to ensure that all officers, employees, and agents of the organization are aware of the code of conduct.

# 3. Financial Management Systems

Applicants selected for funding must provide documentation demonstrating that the applicant's financial management system satisfies the requirements in 45 CFR 2543.21(b). Consistent with the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C.7501-07), if the applicant expended \$500,000 or more in federal awards in its most recent fiscal year, such documentation must include a certification form or most recent audit by the applicant's independent public accountant that the applicant maintains internal controls over federal awards, complies with applicable laws, regulations and contract or grant provisions, and prepares appropriate financial statements. If approved for funding applicants will be notified by the Corporation of any additional documentation to be provided. The applicant will have at least 30 calendar days to respond to this requirement. If an applicant does not respond within the prescribed time or responds with insufficient documentation, then the Corporation may determine that the applicant has not met this requirement and may withdraw the grant.

#### 4. Use of Materials

To ensure that materials generated with Corporation funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and sub-grantees, the Corporation reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the agreement, including data, and to authorize others to do so. The provider must agree to make such publications and materials available to the national service field, as identified by the Corporation, at no cost or at the cost of reproduction through the Corporation's Resource Center. All materials developed for the Corporation must be consistent with Corporation editorial and publication guidelines and must be accessible to individuals with disabilities to the extent required by law.

## C. Reports and Other Requirements

All grant recipients will be required to report to the Corporation on an annual basis.

#### 1. Performance Measurement and Accountability

The Corporation is committed to accountability and to measuring the performance of all of its grantees. The award recipient for this competition must identify the critical outcomes of their work, indicators of success in this work, and how progress can be judged or measured. The recipient will be required to report annually on agreed upon performance measures. Specific guidance on the collection of data against these standardized measures will be provided upon award. The Corporation may also require an independent assessment of grantee performance.

# 2. Planning and Progress Reports

# a) Planning documents

Budget projections for the upcoming budget period showing projected training and technical assistance activities, numbers of participants, costs, and cost factors.

## b) Progress reports

An annual progress report is due thirty days after completion of performance period for the award. The report will include:

- Budget report for the completed budget period.
- Narrative analysis of the budget report, explaining differences between budgeted and actual activities and costs by funding source.
- Progress towards performance measurements.
- Analysis of subgrantee or client feedback with aggregations of trainingparticipant evaluations by funding source.
- Discussion of any problems observed or experienced and recommended solutions.
- List of upcoming activities and events with dates and locations.

#### 3. Financial Reports

Financial status reports (FSRs) must be submitted semi-annually. The reports are cumulative and must be submitted on the Corporation's web-based grants management system, eGrants, no later than 30 days after the close of each reporting period.

#### 4. Final Reports

In addition to an annual report the award recipient completing their agreement periods will be required to submit a final report that is cumulative over the entire award period and consistent with the close-out requirements of the Corporation's Office of Grants Management. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the agreement. In lieu of the last semi-annual FSR, a final FSR must also be submitted. The final FSR is due 90 days after the end of the agreement.

#### 5. Other data-collection requirements

The award recipient must:

- a) Submit copies of all curricula, handouts, and other materials developed to the Resource Center and the National Service Learning Clearinghouse, the Corporation's knowledge management providers;
- b) Identify and document effective practices in their topical area of expertise and submit them to the Corporation's effective practices database on the TTA website and relevant listservs as appropriate;
- As directed, use the Corporation's brand for all Corporation supported training and technical assistance activities and use provided graphic templates for materials production;
- d) Meet as necessary with their cognizant program officer, or other staff or consultants designated by the Corporation to review work plans and budgets,

- monitor progress, and exchange ideas and information concerning training and technical assistance;
- e) Keep current the listing of upcoming activities with dates and locations posted on the Corporation's Master Calendar as requested.

# VII. Agency Contacts

This Notice is available at

http://www.nationalservice.gov/for\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The TTY number is 202–606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call the Special Initiatives Hotline at (202) 606-7507. Or send an e-mail to VolCapBuild@cns.gov.

**Public Burden Statement**: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the Corporation to inform all potential persons who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)). This collection is approved under OMB Control #: 3045-0108 (Expiration Date: 07/31/2008).