



CITIES OF SERVICE

Request for Proposals

Cities of Service Impact Volunteering Fund

Summary

Founded in New York City on September 10, 2009 by 17 mayors from cities around the nation, Cities of Service is a bipartisan coalition of mayors who have committed to work together to engage citizens in a multi-year effort to address pressing city needs through impact volunteering. The coalition includes more than 160 mayors, representing nearly 50 million Americans across the nation. Cities of Service supports mayors to leverage citizen service strategies, addressing local needs and making government more effective. All Cities of Service efforts are characterized by a concept called “impact volunteering” – volunteer strategies that target community needs, use best practices, and set clear outcomes and measures to gauge progress.

To build on growing interest in Cities of Service and the practice of “impact volunteering,” we are offering competitive grants to help more cities use service as a strategy to tackle pressing local challenges. The *Cities of Service Impact Volunteering Fund* supports cities that are committing substantial resources to implement the Cities of Service model, as well as those that are interested in implementing it seriously for the first time. Technical assistance and coaching are provided to all grantees so that cities can achieve greater outcomes, report clear impact metrics, and share learnings with the larger Cities of Service coalition.

The *Cities of Service Impact Volunteering Fund* is a \$2 million fund administered by The Fund for Cities of Service, a 501(c)(3). The first round of grants was awarded in the fall of 2012. A second round of grants will be made this winter. Three sizes of grants will be made:

- \$25,000 grants for a single initiative plus the possibility for a \$5,000 bonus;
- \$50,000 grants for multiple initiatives; and
- \$100,000 grants for multiple initiatives.

Any mayor whose city is a member of the Cities of Service coalition is eligible to apply on behalf of the city and its partners. However, the multiple initiative grants will be limited to cities that have secured public or private local funding to support a full-time Chief Service Officer for the duration of the grant. No grants will be made that extend beyond the term of the mayor. However, cities may propose a term for a grant that is less than a year, provided that the proposed initiative benchmarks will be met within that period.

All interested cities will be asked to fill out a short [online Verification of Eligibility](#) to help determine their eligibility to apply for this grant. Once eligibility has been determined, interested cities will receive notification from Cities of Service with instructions for accessing the application documents. The on-line Verification of Eligibility must be completed no later than September 6, 2013, though we encourage you to fill this out as soon as possible as confirmation is needed before you can be given access to the online application documents. Grant applications are due on September 13, 2013.

Joining the Cities of Service coalition

This grant opportunity is for Cities of Service coalition members only. Not currently a member? Joining is easy. The Mayor will simply need to sign the [Declaration of Service](#) that has already been signed by more than 160 mayors around the country, committing to:

- Develop a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need;
- Work with other mayors and elected officials to advance strategies and best practices that accelerate the service movement and produce measurable results;
- Encourage other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens; and
- Ensure that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

Please email info@citiesofservice.org for more information or to join today.

Grants

Grant types and size: Grants will be made available to:

- Support a single initiative with a one-year grant in the amount of \$25,000; or
- Support multiple initiatives with a one-year grant in the amount of either \$50,000 or \$100,000.

These grants are flat amounts.

Cities receiving single-initiative grants are eligible for bonus grants in the amount of \$5,000 if they achieve the one-year impact benchmarks specified in their plans.

Eligibility: Grants are available to cities whose mayors are members of the Cities of Service coalition and whose term of office extends through the length of the grant. Applications must be submitted by the city's Office of the Mayor on behalf of the city, city agencies, and any nonprofit partners.

If a city has previously received funding from Cities of Service (e.g., a Leadership Grant, Love Your Block Grant, Third Grade Reads Grant, Volunteer CPR Grant, or a first round grant from the Impact Volunteering Fund), funds received through this round of the Cities of Service Impact Volunteering Fund must be used to deliver additional impact beyond the impact specified in the city's original service plan or previous grant agreement (i.e., in terms of scale or depth of impact).

Use of Funds: Funds may only be used for the purposes specified in the initiative template(s) submitted as part of the application. They may not be used to pay a Chief Service Officer's (CSO) salary or benefits; nor may they be used to hire new city staff, although they can be used to cover a portion of the salaries and benefits of existing staff that will support the proposed initiatives, other than the CSO. They also may be used for AmeriCorps matches or cost-share VISTAs.

Grant requirements

Requirements for single initiative grants

Single initiative proposals are eligible for competitive grants of \$25,000. In addition, if specific benchmarks are achieved, Cities of Service may award a bonus grant of up to \$5,000, for a total of \$30,000 per awardee. Cities are encouraged, but not required, to use Service as a Strategy blueprints.

Requirements for multi-initiative grants

Any mayor's office that has a locally funded CSO for the term of the grant-funding period is eligible to compete for a multi-initiative grant. Cities must have committed to hiring or retaining a full-time CSO for

the term of the grant using local funding (such as public funds, private philanthropic, or other support) to support the position. The CSO must be a member of the mayor's senior team.

Grants will be awarded in set amounts of \$50,000 and \$100,000 to fund the implementation of at least two impact initiatives. CSOs should apply on behalf of the mayor's office.

Terms that apply to all grants

- Cities must be members of the Cities of Service coalition.
- Cities must agree to take part in regular, intensive technical assistance.
- Cities must agree to Cities of Service reporting requirements.
- Cities must agree that the mayor will make a public announcement about the grant, with the text approved by Cities of Service.
- Cities must begin work on their initiative(s) no later than January 31, 2014, unless otherwise specified by Cities of Service.
- No grant funds may be used to displace existing city or community resources.

Applications

Cities applying for single-initiative or multi-initiative grants must complete the [online Verification of Eligibility](#) to apply for this grant. Once a city's eligibility has been confirmed, Cities of Service will notify the applicant and send instructions for accessing the application documents. The application will consist of a complete Initiative Template and a complete Measurement Template for each initiative that will be funded by the grant. These forms call for basic information on the city, a copy of the city's service plan, details of the proposed initiative(s), and one letter of support from the key initiative partner describing that partner's role. All application documents and the link to the Verification of Eligibility can be found at www.citiesofservice.org/resources.

Selection criteria

- Quality of initiative plan (40%)
- Degree of scale and impact (e.g., number of beneficiaries, share of need met, and depth of impact) (30%)
- Resources leveraged (10%)
- Strength of partnership and partner (10%)
- Role of mayor (10%)

Preferences*

- Demonstrated commitment to the Cities of Service Declaration principles, for example by:
 - Developing and launching a service plan or impact initiatives, or
 - Spending local resources to carry out the Declaration and related service initiatives.
- Cities that are applying to implement a Service as a Strategy Blueprint.
- Cities that will post impact results under this grant no later than January 31, 2015.
- Cities whose CSO or equivalent carries the Chief Service Officer title.
- Cities that are putting significant local city resources (e.g., financial or in-kind) toward the initiative.

*Note that if your city has received prior funding from Cities of Service, the city's performance on the previous grant(s) will be considered when evaluating the new application. Cities that have achieved their impact goals, or made significant progress toward those goals, will receive a preference in the grant competition.

Deadlines

The full application, comprised of a city's final Initiative Template(s) and Measurement Template(s), is due no later than September 13, 2013. The templates must be submitted online.

For more information

Contact Cities of Service at info@citiesofservice.org.

Glossary

AmeriCorps match: The matching funds required to receive an AmeriCorps grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service or a state service commission.

Chief Service Officer: A senior city official responsible for developing and implementing a high-impact, citywide service plan to increase volunteerism and target volunteers to address their city's greatest needs.

Cities of Service Declaration principles:

- Develop a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need;
- Work with other mayors and elected officials to advance strategies and best practices that accelerate the service movement and produce measurable results;
- Encourage other mayors to join this national effort to engage our citizens; and
- Ensure that the voice of cities is heard in federal legislative, policy, and program discussions related to service, which will help the country achieve the ambitious goals of the Serve America Act.

Cost-share VISTAs: VISTAs supported with private or other funds not provided by the federal VISTA program administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. AmeriCorps VISTAs commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency helping to create or expand programs designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. They receive a poverty-level living allowance and other benefits as a result of their service. Through cost sharing, a sponsoring organization rather than the federal government pays the living allowance for some or all of its VISTAs.

Impact Volunteering: Volunteer strategies that target community needs, use best practices, and set clear outcomes and measures to gauge progress.

Mayoral Priority: A local problem or concern that is among the mayor's top issues for action.

Service as a Strategy Blueprints: A set of toolkits that provide step-by-step instructions to carry out defined initiatives that address specific challenges. The full set of Service as a Strategy Blueprints is available at <http://www.citiesofservice.org/resources/blueprints/>.

Service Plan: A comprehensive and coordinated plan that describes the city's strategy for matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need. Examples of service plans can be found at <http://www.citiesofservice.org/leadership-cities/>.