

## 2016 TTA application for Commission funds

[**Note for Commissioners:** The format comes from the federal instructions. The Executive Summary is a fill-in-the-blanks Paragraph that we were instructed not to alter. The activities are dictated by a menu of very narrow acceptable activities listed in the NOFA. Thankfully, everything MCCS wants to do can fit. The amount of funding is from an allocations chart.

The text submitted to CNCS is difficult to read. The actual character count in the online federal grants portal was one-third of the size announced in the instructions. Naturally, the instructions asked for information that presumed the larger character count. MCCS staff prepared the narrative to cover all the requested points. In order to enter the required information, we had to use texting code and other writing tricks. Our goal is to speed the award process by eliminating federal requests for additional information during their review process in June.]

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maine Commission for Community Service, the Maine state service commission, will provide the following training and technical assistance activities with the Commission Investment Funds: technical assistance and training (in person and online) for potential grant applicants; coordination for state and regional training events; technical assistance on collection and use of data; conduct state professional development or training events; and re-instate the position of Training and Program Development Officer. The Maine commission is requesting \$90,090 to support training and technical assistance activities. The Maine commission does not intend to apply to host a regional national service training conference in 2017.

### PROGRAM DESIGN

When TTA was confirmed in 1/16, the MCCS Exec Committee recommended to the board that the primary purpose of the restored Training & Program Development Officer (TPDO) position be:

- grow the capacity of agencies in rural ME to enable them to develop viable proposals for National Service programs. This means leading cohorts of agencies thru Service Enterprise, using the SED as the pre/post measure for agency strength, training them on volunteer management & National Service program requirements.
- increase the skills, knowledge, & abilities of National Service staff so they advance thru the National Service Program Director competencies.
- provide technical assistance (TA) & training to agencies seeking AmeriCorps (AC) funding so proposals rate well in state reviews.
- foster AC program development in MCCS priority funding areas (critical needs) where no proposals have been submitted. Initial focus will be on school readiness & out-of-school youth service that incorporates service-learning.

Under this NOFA, all MCCS goals can be implemented. Timing will be out of synch with MCCS' operational schedule. A July start means all program development & TA will begin at the same time as next grant competition (9/2016). Thus, results of developing AC opportunities in the northern 50% of ME will not be evident until 9/2017, well after the completion of this period. The TPDO will be responsible for activities that have been minimally supported during the past 4 years. Specifically those are joint training/TA activities planned & conducted by VT/ ME /NH commissions; TA to small rural agencies seeking to host NCCC teams; coordination between the Service Year Exchange & participating ME National Service; & reinstatement of quarterly training for the ME National Service Council.

**AREA 1: INCREASE AMERICORPS SERVICES IN RURAL OR UNDER-SERVED AREAS OF THE STATE.** MCCS has had discussions with individual agencies & coalitions in 10 counties where there is little AC impact. The tactic for developing capacity is to work with & thru these groups to identify needs appropriate for AC & then lead them thru a program development process. The process will build on MCCS' 5 yr old, 2-day training but change the pace, depth, & timing. The process will combine in-person & virtual sessions with participant assignments as well as review of their work, critique & additional information. First, time will be allotted between July & Sept to retooling our seminar & formatting it to fit both in-person & online use. The timeline for program development begins with community conversations & establishing networks during Fall 2016; program development work from 1/2017- 6/ 2017; submission of concept papers in 7/2017; & applications to the 2017 AC competition.

MCCS recognizes the underdeveloped level of volunteer management & public grant management skills in rural areas where community interest in AC is strong. The TPDO will help potential applicants develop volunteer management capacity & operational capacity using our online CMV 101 course & Service Enterprise. The Service Enterprise Diagnostic (SED), a pre/post instrument, will help pinpoint areas where likely applicants can gain the most in planning an AC program. The TPDO will co-lead the ME Service Enterprise Network so info about cohort training, follow thru from referred agencies, & successes/challenges can inform decisions about referrals for Service Enterprise.

MCCS recognizes that AC is equated with trail building & environmental activities due to the 50 year legacy of Conservation Corps. Thus, an added tactic will help municipal, county, & community-based agencies develop non-environmental projects appropriate for NCCC consideration. The short burst of NCCC presence & community interaction with NCCC members will be used in the same way other agencies use program exchanges to learn about models & understand the potential application to their parochial situations.

**AREAS 2 & 3: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND CROSS-STREAM PARTNERSHIPS and STRENGTHEN SUBGRANTEES' ABILITY TO CONDUCT HIGH QUALITY PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION IN ORDER TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS AND BUILD EVIDENCE.** The ME National Service Council met quarterly thru 2012 & brought together Senior Corps, Campus Compact, AC, & VGF program staff. The agenda had 2 distinct portions, one of which was training based on the competencies for National Service program staff. MCCS's ability to sustain that effort & provide quality TA to AC was hampered by available staff time in the last 3 years. The TPDO will resurrect this joint training & TA approach. A TA priority is visibility in the communities served & the relationship between recruitment success & community awareness. The MCCS outreach task force has undertaken work but developing program skills, knowledge, & approaches in this area stalled due to staff time constraints.

A second area of collaboration for MCCS will be the proposed joint training organized by the VT/ME/NH commissions for National Service programs. It is our understanding that VT/NH want to address performance measurement & have addressed the "how" in their TTA applications. It is anticipated trainings will be short (24 hours) & in-person to promote diversity, prompt new views, & build connections.

Data collection will be a focus for monthly Maine AC Staff Network. Program staff are working thru the Brunner Foundation evaluation curriculum (a free tool complete with pre/post tests, exercises, readings, homework, etc.). A unit of the course is covered at each monthly AC program meeting & all will be completed by June. The next step is developing & improving data collection. While data verification will remain with the Grant Officer, the TPDO will work with program staff to refine, develop, & test the models they created in the Bruner evaluation course.

**\*\*NOTE:** The TTA funding does not support putting the travel to September's symposium on this grant. The TPDO will attend using funds already budgeted under the Commission Support Grant **\*\***

**AREA 4: PROMOTE A POSITIVE AMERICORPS MEMBER EXPERIENCE AND LIFE-LONG COMMITMENT TO SERVICE.** Recent AC member conference planning and execution relied heavily on a Commissioner. The TPDO will take on these staff functions. The MCCS board is now identifying which National Service Days & projects it will undertake. The exercise recognizes MCCS cannot do a project a month nor should the programs be expected to go off mission that often. Based on their decisions, the TPDO will work with AC program staff & Grant Officer to coordinate AC Launch, AC Week, & one other event (TBD) that connects AC members to the community.

**AREA 5: IMPROVE COMMISSION CAPACITY TO DESIGN, DELIVER, AND MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.** See next section for discussion of staff position.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

MCCS has managed to keep the position formerly designated as Training Officer viable in the state budget system. When the appropriation passed Congress in December 2015 & an unofficial assessment of allocations was shared among states, MCCS arranged to conduct a contingent hiring process. This type of hiring process completes the search, selection, & background portions leading to an offer of employment contingent on receiving funding (award, contract, appropriation, etc.).

Based on the Commission (board) priorities & MCCS Strategic Plan, a job description was authorized in February 2016 by State of Maine Bureau of Human Resources. The position was advertised, applicants reviewed, & a contingent offer of employment as the TPDO was made on March 25 to Michael Ashmore. He accepted on March 30. Mike has been with the Commission since April 5, 2010. He serves as the Grant Programs Officer & has experience providing effective program training as well as TA to potential applicants & AmeriCorps programs. In addition, he attended the performance measurement & evaluation training sessions offered during & after the annual CNCS Grantee Symposiums held in 2012, 2013, 2014, & 2015 as well as the regional conference sessions in Brunswick NJ & Hartford CT. All this gave him the CNCS perspective to which he has added 20 years as an educator, the last several years of which focused on professional development of teachers as Maine schools transitioned to education based on performance standards.

NOTE: In anticipation of the Grant Officer vacancy, another contingent hiring process is underway. The new Grant Programs Officer should be identified by May 31. It should be noted that all the hiring offers are based on CNCS awarding the TTA funding no later than July 8.

**COST-EFFECTIVENESS & BUDGET ADEQUACY**

N/A per instructions.

**a. Priority Performance Area #1: Increase AmeriCorps services in rural or under-served areas of the state**

Required output:

10 - # of organizations receiving training for potential grant applicants

Required outcome:

2 - # of organizations receiving training that applied for AmeriCorps grant

**b. Priority Performance Area #2: Increase collaboration & cross-stream partnerships**

Required output:

6 -# of local, state or regional training events or service projects

Required output outcome:

12 -# of program staff participating in training events or service projects that improved their knowledge of the national service network

**c. Priority Performance Area #3: Strengthen subgrantees' ability to conduct high quality performance measurement & evaluation in order to improve programs & build evidence**

**Aligned PM 2**

Required Output:

6 -- # of subgrantees receiving training &/or technical assistance on data collection practices

Outcome:

5 -- # of subgrantee organizations that improved data collection plans

**2012 MCCS Program Development And Training (PDAT) Budget - match not required**

Training/Program Development

**REVENUES - Admin requires \$1:\$1 match**

Base Allocation	90,090.00
External Partnerships and activity fees	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90,090.00</b>

**EXPENSES**

**Personnel**

MCCS Staff Salaries/Wages (Training Officer @ 1.0FTE , Planning Research Associate @ 0.2 FTE)	46,530.00
Personnel Fringe	30,974.86
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>77,504.86</b>

**Travel**

**Staff**

Staff In-State travel for site visits and grantee training: 150 mi/mo X 1 program staff X 12 mos X \$0.44/mi budgeted on admin

Conference travel, Out of State: [1 nat'l mtg X (\$500 plane/train fare + 4 days @ \$300 meals/lodging + \$50 ground transport + 4days airport parking @\$10/day + \$300 registration= \$2,090)] + 0 regional mtgs X (500 miles @ \$0.44 + 3 days @ \$250 meals/lodging + \$200 registration) budgeted on admin

**Subtotal** -

**Equipment**

**Subtotal**

**Supplies**

Mail/Shipping including state interagency (\$10./mo X 12 mos) budgeted on admin

Service Enterprise Diagnostic: (8 Service Enterprise diagnostics cost shared @ \$100 of \$280) 800.00

Consumable office supplies (\$50\*12 months) 800.00

**Subtotal** 800.00

**Contractual & Consultant Services**

**Subtotal** -

**Other Support Costs**

Meeting space rental

**Communications**

Communications OIT single per person fee (phone, email, computers, internet, toll, conference calls, server document storage, etc.) for (1 staff X \$283/mo X 12 mos) 3,396.00

Adobe trainer license: 1 yr X \$1,800

**Special Activities**

Joint ME/NH/VT training for National Service program staff: cost share 50% of (20 attendees @ \$200 pp to cover facility, materials, per diem, trainer) 3,396.00

**Subtotal** 3,396.00

**Indirect Costs**

Indirect @ 10.6 % 8,389.14

**Total All Expenses** 90,090.00

**Unbudgeted balance of grant available** 0.00