



MICHIGAN COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMISSION NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR VOLUNTEER MICHIGAN

The Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) is pleased to announce the availability of federal funds to support defined volunteer generation, focused community collaboration, and tracking efforts to start December 2010 for an initial 12-month program cycle and based on availability of funds, there is a possibility of an additional two years of funding.

What is Volunteer Michigan?

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009 reauthorized and expanded the mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to include strengthening the nation's volunteer infrastructure. A new initiative established in this legislation is the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF). The VGF awards grants to states to recruit, manage and support volunteers and strengthen the nation's volunteer infrastructure. In 2010-11, the inaugural year of funding, grants are being made to state commissions.

The MCSC requested VGF funding to grant to volunteer connectors in Michigan to strategically enhance the volunteer infrastructure and capacity of non-profit organizations to more effectively engage volunteers. The funding will support Volunteer Michigan, a 3-year initiative to increase the number of volunteers addressing **health** and **public safety** issues in local communities and statewide. This program will allow communities to create collaborative models for using service as a strategy to meet critical needs. Efforts will support, build, and expand the capacity of existing volunteer connectors and cultivate connector access for underserved communities.

Who are we?

This initiative will be administered by the MCSC in partnership with Volunteer Centers of Michigan (VCM).

The MCSC funds and supports programs that encourage all Michigan residents to volunteer. We work to fulfill this mission through a number of programs, projects, and activities focused on service and volunteerism. These programs include Learn and Serve – Michigan, Mentor Michigan, and Michigan's AmeriCorps. Annually, the MCSC distributes nearly \$9 million in national service and volunteerism grants.

VCM is a membership organization that strengthens, develops and connects volunteer centers throughout the state. The Volunteer Centers of Michigan works on behalf of volunteer centers, not as a trade association, but as a support to each Volunteer Center's efforts to promote voluntary civic involvement as a primary response and solution to local community problems.

Who is eligible to apply?

Existing volunteer connectors and emerging connectors in underserved communities are eligible to apply. Volunteer connectors are organizations whose mission is directly related to connecting individuals with volunteer opportunities. Volunteer connectors typically connect volunteers with other community organizations (organizations other than the volunteer connector agency itself). Volunteer connectors also support organizations and professional volunteer coordinators in effectively using those volunteers to create meaningful change in local communities. For example, volunteer centers and retired and senior volunteer programs are prototypical volunteer connector organizations.

Priorities for Volunteer Generation

The MCSC recently conducted a statewide 10-city listening tour: *Michigan's Voices for Volunteerism*. More than 400 voices provided input on how to expand volunteerism to help

address our biggest challenges. Community leaders, citizens, and representatives from a variety of sectors participated in the process and have provided input on local community challenges. Many community concerns were raised during the listening tour and a number of concerns were common across communities such as: the economy, education, foreclosures, health, and public safety. As a result of this input, **Volunteer Michigan** will address health and public safety, two critical issues identified through the Listening Tour.

Volunteer Michigan will focus on increasing: the number of volunteers participating in activities focused on health and public safety issues, volunteer retention, replicable collaborative models for volunteer mobilization, volunteer participation on National Days of Service, and engagement of highly skilled volunteers. Goals will be achieved by increasing the capacity of volunteer connectors and the non-profits they serve. Capacity will be increased in the areas of training, media and awareness, collaborative planning, technology support, and implementation of Hands On Connect (a volunteer management platform). By identifying the priority issues of health and public safety, additional opportunities will be available through which volunteers with interest and expertise may engage in meaningful service. If there are health or public safety needs in your community in these areas that you believe can be addressed by the involvement of people serving together, then this program is for you.

Funds Available and Grant Size

The MCSC has \$300,000 available to fund Volunteer Michigan grants. Grants may range in size from \$30,000 to \$50,000. Funds may be available for a second and third year to focus further on implementation of volunteer engagement plans, increased collaborative membership, and meeting higher benchmarks.

Match requirement

Volunteer connectors will be required to provide 30% match toward their grant. The match may be non-CNCS cash or in-kind.

Volunteer Michigan – Overview

The MCSC will provide grants to engage seven (7) local communities in expanded and sustainable programming. To apply for funds, local volunteer connectors must create a community collaborative that consists of a minimum of five (5) key community organizations that address either public safety or health issues (**MUST CHOOSE EITHER PUBLIC SAFETY OR HEALTH...CANNOT SELECT BOTH ISSUES**). Examples of organizations include, but are not limited to: health agencies, federally qualified health centers, health departments, hospitals, police departments, citizen corps councils, K12 schools, institutions of higher education, and government. Preference will be given to collaboratives that include a Cities of Service Office. (Please go to www.citiesofservice.org to find out more about Cities of Service). Only one collaborative will be funded per community. The establishment of a collaborative will build out the capacity and sustainability of volunteer connectors by strengthening local nonprofits.

Meaningful volunteer activities may integrate awareness building, outreach, and prevention and education. Examples include health and nutrition education, chronic disease self-management, physical activity programs, transportation to medical appointments, neighborhood watch programs, safety education, and safe routes to school. Focusing on community challenges will provide new roles that complement volunteers' skill sets and will also garner the support and investment of organizations and individuals that are not currently active in the volunteer sector.

In Year I, the MCSC and the VCM will roll-out Hands On Connect; grantees will focus on technology integration, assessment, planning, system development, and training. Assessment of the volunteer engagement capacity of each collaborative member will identify how the organization engages volunteers. The assessment will be developed in partnership with an external evaluator to ensure consistent data is being collected across all sites.

Grantee Responsibilities

Grantees will be required to use Hands On Connect, a full lifecycle volunteer management platform that will increase the capacity of volunteer connectors to manage, track, and report on people, programs, and volunteer opportunities. The system permits searching by volunteer skills, includes easy links to social media, and allows targeted campaign emails to volunteers. It will also allow statewide management of national days of service, statewide level aggregated impact reporting, and enhanced recognition functionality. The system will be used to track volunteer numbers and activities and measure the proposed outcomes. Training and technical assistance will be provided to local communities to enable them to effectively integrate this system to increase their capacity to recruit and match volunteers to meaningful roles based on skills and interests.

Volunteer Connectors will work with a minimum of five (5) collaborative organizations and a Cities of Service Office (if applicable) to develop a 3-year plan for volunteer engagement in the issue area selected. The plan will include new ways to utilize volunteers, volunteer engagement support systems, strategies for engagement of a diverse group of highly skilled volunteers, and plans for National Days of Service integrating volunteers in Health/Safety focused projects. Plans will include key targets and benchmarks for accountability. Each grantee must engage 250 new volunteers and retain 30% of existing volunteers.

Timeline

August 6, 2010	Request for Proposals released by MCSC
August 16, 2010	Technical assistance webinar
August 27, 2010	<i>Intent to Apply</i> due to the MCSC
September 13, 2010	Applications will be due to the MCSC
October 29, 2010	Applicants informed of funding decisions
December 1, 2010	Grantee Start Date

Volunteer Connectors will also develop a collaborative training and technical assistance plan to build capacity to engage volunteers, utilizing a variety of formats such as webinars, conference calls, and face-to-face training. The connector will provide onsite technical assistance to each agency as needed, site visits, and collaborative meetings to problem solve and share progress to-date and best practices to promote sustainability.

Grantees will report quarterly to the MCSC on targets to date, outcomes, program successes and challenges. Grantees will also report expenditures monthly to the MCSC for reimbursement.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions regarding *Volunteer Michigan* or the application process, please contact Steve Springer, MCSC Deputy Director, (517) 335-1013, springers@michigan.gov.