

Responses to Questions
for *New York State Volunteer Generation Fund/RFP# 2017-25*

Q1	When are proposals due?
A1	All applications in response to the 2018 VGF RFP are due no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on Monday, January 29, 2018. **The Commission has extended the deadline from January 26, 2018, to January 29, 2018, at 4:00 p.m. ET. This change will be reflected in the amended RFP.**
Q2	How much funding is available for applicants?
A2	Awards will range between \$70,000 and \$90,000 per year for up to three years. Continuation funding each year depends on funding availability and contractor performance. The awards will be split between state and federal funding and the percentages will be determined at a later point in time.
Q3	Are applicants expected to explicitly address each of the OCFS priorities listed in the RFP?
A3	No. The Commission supports all of the OCFS priorities listed in Section 2.2, and encourages applicants to consider them in their program design. However, applicants must respond directly to the criteria listed in Section 5.0 Proposal Content and Submission of the RFP.
Q4	Is the Vender Responsibility prequalification requirement separate from the Grants Gateway prequalification?
A4	Yes. Section 3.2 of the RFP describes the “Prequalification Process,” and Section 3.2.1 provides instructions on how to “Register in the Grants Gateway.” Your agency is required to register in the Grants Gateway, and then prequalify in the Grants Gateway. In addition, Section 3.3 Vendor Responsibility Requirements describes the process for completing a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire. As noted in Section 3.3 Vendor Responsibility Requirements, confirmation of completion of this questionnaire must be submitted with your proposal.
Q5	When must an applicant complete the VendRep System Questionnaire?
A5	As stated in Section 3.3, confirmation of completion of the vendor responsibility process must be submitted with your proposal. This confirmation can take the form of registration in the VendRep system, or by submitting your completed hardcopy questionnaire.
Q6	Is a statement of permission required for using New York State grant funds as a match?
A6	We do not require such a statement.
Q7	Can an applicant use state funds as match?
A7	Yes, state funds other than those provided through the VGF grant may be used to match VGF funding.
Q8	Can an applicant use federal funds as match?
A8	Applicants may be able to use other federal funds as match under limited circumstances and with appropriate permissions. Prior to applying, an applicant that intends to use other federal funds as match must discuss their intention with the other federal source of funds. That discussion must be documented. Written permission from the other federal agency whose funds an applicant intends to use must be obtained and submitted with the applicant’s proposal.
Q9	What is the difference between Cash and In-Kind match?
A9	Cash match is any support that is provided by the applicant. Support from a third-party can come in the form of either cash or in-kind, such as training, space, supplies, etc.
Q10	Is an applicant allowed to use its federally-approved indirect cost rate as match?

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A10	Yes, provided the applicant reflects this in the grantee share of the budget.
Q11	How does an applicant report its federally-approved indirect cost rate?
A11	Indirect costs must be included within section C of the budget (administrative costs). If an applicant has a federally-approved indirect cost rate, proof must be submitted with the application.
Q12	Will a downloadable Work Plan template be available in the Grants Gateway System?
A12	No. Page 19 of the RFP has been amended by eliminating the requirement that you download the workplan from the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the gateway. The language in Section 5.1 Technical Proposal Content/Work Plan describes the content of both the “application” and the “Work Plan.” Use the guidelines listed in Section 5.1 Technical Proposal Content/Work Plan to answer the questions in Section 5.4 Proposal Content. Respond to these questions in the Grants Gateway in the “Program Specific Questions” section of your application.
Q13	I understand that one of the flagship’s partner organizations should have expertise working on alleviating a root cause - or root causes - of hunger. However, must that organization also directly work on alleviating hunger?
A13	No. It is not a requirement. This is dependent on your program design and how partners work with flagships and with one another.
Q14	Are the targets and flagship responsibilities listed on page 21 of the RFP per year or for three years?
A14	Targets and flagship responsibilities listed on page 21 of the RFP (Section 5.1.B) are annual targets and responsibilities.
Q15	Are we able to work with partners in multiple target communities as listed in Section 5.3 on pg. 37, or should we work with partners in only one of the specified target communities?
A15	Applicants are permitted to work with partners in multiple target communities..
Q16	Can VGF funding be used to help build capacity at SUNY and CUNY colleges as part of Governor Cuomo’s “No Student Goes Hungry” plan?
A16	Yes, VGF funding may be used to build capacity at colleges as part of Governor Cuomo’s “No Student Goes Hungry” plan. However, applicants must still adhere to the guidelines and requirements outlined in the RFP.
Q17	Could you provide more guidance on what areas you consider “root causes of hunger?”
A17	The causes cited in the RFP are examples, however there are a myriad of causes. Applicants should articulate the particular expertise of each of their partner agencies, including those that address the root causes of hunger.
Q18	Partner with experience addressing root causes: Can the lead agency be the one with experience addressing root causes? For example, we run a regional transportation and mobility management program (Section 4.1 Desired Outcomes & Program Requirements, page 16).
A18	A lead agency can be considered one “partner” within the program design. Please be sure to meet all the other criteria relative to volunteer generation capacity building & hunger alleviation. In addition, the bidder must meet the Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications to apply.
Q19	One partner must address root causes of hunger. Is that partner expected to assist the other partners or is the idea that the grant activities support an agency more focused on root causes of poverty than hunger?

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A19	All partner agencies must focus on hunger issues, with at least one focused on the root causes. It would be ideal if that partner could assist the others. The lead agency, however, must provide volunteer generation capacity building assistance to each partner.
Q20	Food Desert Definition: Are you using ½ mile or 1 mile in urban and 10 miles or 20 miles in rural - Section 5.4 Proposal Content - Work Plan Questions # 12 (page 38)?
A20	Please see definition in Section 5.3 Key Concepts.
Q21	We would like an explanation as to what this grant covers as far as volunteers to distribute food to the needy. What does the grant cover and what would the funds be used for?
A21	Please review Section 2.3, Purpose and Funding Availability, Section 5.1 Technical Proposal Content (page 19); as well as Section 5.2 Proposed Budget.
Q22	Regarding the target of providing support, services, education, and/or referrals for 8,333 individuals to alleviate long-term hunger included in Section 5.1.B, may some individuals be counted more than once if they receive multiple support, services, education, and/or referrals or if they receive support, services, education, and/or referrals at multiple locations?
A22	The Commission agrees that it would be difficult to track service recipients that receive support at more than one agency. However, people that regularly receive support at one of your partner agencies can only be counted once.
Q23	Are programs allowed to count individuals who participate in days of service as part of the target of providing 8,333 individuals with support, services, education, and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger?
A23	Programs may count individuals who participate in days of service as volunteers. If those individuals, or others who participate in days of service, also receive support, services, education, and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger, they may be counted as part of the 8,333 target referenced in section 5.1.B.
Q24	In section 4.1 of the RFP, it says: “Applicants are advised to survey partner organizations prior to applying about their needs for volunteer assistance, and should state how they will address those needs.” Does the Commission recommend a pre-assessment instrument?
A24	With the guidance of the Commission, the pre-assessment instrument will be jointly developed and implemented by all grantees, prior to implementation of activities supported by this grant. We expect baseline information about your partners and their needs at this time. Your survey of partner agencies will inform the development of the statewide tool, should your agency receive funding.
Q25	Does the grant require that specific territories or service areas be targeted (i.e. REDC areas) or are service areas defined by applicants themselves? Is there a preference to follow specific territories or service areas?
A25	Programs must operate within New York State. Bonus points are defined in Section 6.2.
Q26	Can we count the number of volunteers, hours of service, and number of individuals impacted by meals served or other activities as a result of Hunger Awareness Day activities as part of the overall grant metrics?
A26	Yes – days of service are allowable and measurable activities.
Q27	When do you anticipate award announcements to be made, and what is the anticipated dispersal date?

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A27	The Commission anticipates announcing awards no earlier than February 6, 2018 (see Section 1.2 Calendar of Events in the RFP).
Q28	Is there a required or recommended page limit for the logic model?
A28	Per Section 5.1 B, the Logic Model Template should be used for each of the five listed performance measures listed. There are no page limits for each of these five individual Logic Models, that represent each of the five required performance measures, however, each one should fit on a single page.
Q29	How do I submit application responses beyond the Grants Gateway field limitation of 4,000 characters?
A29	Applicants may continue their responses in a separate file of no longer than two pages, labeled with the applicable question number. The file should be uploaded to the Grantee Document folder.
Q30	How should volunteer time be valued for match purposes? Do we use a flat rate, minimum wage, or some other value?
A30	Volunteer time cannot be used as match unless the volunteer is providing professional services to support the agency. The value of the match is determined by the reasonable value of the professional services.