

January 25, 2018

**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
OSMRE VISTA Program**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** Department of the Interior (DOI), The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE)
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** OSMRE Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program
- **Announcement Type:** Initial
- **Opportunity Category:** Discretionary
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** S18AS00006
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 15.254
- **Dates:** Proposals must be received electronically through Grants.gov by Monday, March 12, 2018 at 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time.
- **Application submission Address:** Application must be submitted using Grants.gov
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** OSMRE seeks applications from eligible organizations to assist in the administration of the OSMRE Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program.
- **Anticipated Funding Amounts:** In FY 2018, OSMRE anticipates that one (1) organization will be awarded approximately \$200,000 to administer the OSMRE/VISTA Program over a two (2) year period.
- **Funding Instrument Type:** Cooperative Agreement.
- **Who Is Eligible:** Eligible sponsor organizations must be a non-profit organization with a 501(c)(3) status and have access to AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America positions through partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, or other intermediary organization. Federal, state and local governments are not eligible to receive direct funding.
- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** No cost sharing required.

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FULL TEXT OF THE NOTICE

A. Program Description

1. The authority to award this Cooperative Agreement is found in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, as amended, 30 USC 1201 et seq.; in accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, 31 USC 6301 et seq.; subject to the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR § 200; and under provisions of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended, 42 USC 66 et seq.; and 5 CFR § 315.605, the Appointment of Former ACTION* volunteers.
2. The OSMRE VISTA Program is designed to collaborate with non-profit IRS 501(c) (3) eligible applicants that have access to AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America positions through partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, or other intermediary organization, to administer the OSMRE/VISTA Program.
3. The OSMRE VISTA Program was developed to provide an opportunity for OSMRE to increase its engagement with young men and women with university or vocational degrees.
4. Recipients of an OSMRE VISTA Program financial assistance will support an innovative partnership working directly with OSMRE in the following areas: (1) community and environmental reclamation, (2) community environmental stewardship, (3) economic improvement, (4) educational opportunities, (5) research, (6) mapping, and more.
5. This program place recent graduates from colleges, universities and/ or vocational schools as VISTA Members in communities impacted by pre-regulatory mining practices to serve for a period of one (1) year.
6. A VISTA Member is an individual who engages in national service through an activity approved by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), or an intermediate organization. Members receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, Members may earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that Members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. Members who successfully complete their term of service also receive non-competitive eligibility for Federal jobs.

B. Federal Award Information:

OSMRE is soliciting applications for financial assistance for Fiscal Year (2018 -2019)

1. Funding will be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement. The recipient organization will be awarded a maximum amount of \$200,000 to administer the OSMRE/VISTA Program.
2. The OSMRE VISTA Program will fund up to 60 VISTA Members per year.
3. Anticipated start dates will be based upon date of receipt and evaluation of application, availability of funding appropriations, and project schedule.
4. The Cooperative Agreement will be for a project period not to exceed three years from date of award.
5. The recipient grantee may apply for non-funded extensions of time as necessary to complete the project up to one year.
6. There are no pre-applications requirements with this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).
7. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.24 “Cooperative Agreement”, a Cooperative Agreement creates a legal financial assistance relationship between OSMRE and the performing organization to carry out a public purpose authorized by a law of the United States [see 31 U.S.C. 6101(3)]. OSMRE reserves the right to determine the extent of substantial involvement during the course of the approved project.
8. OSMRE will have substantial involvement in the Cooperative Agreement that will include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following areas:
 - a. Identification of projects.
 - b. Approval of the recipient’s implementation plans.
 - c. Review of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans.
 - d. Approval of specified key personnel.
 - e. Concurrence in the substantive provisions of sub awards.
9. Funding for the program is contingent on availability of appropriations. In no event will OSMRE be responsible for the preparation costs incurred by any applicant if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of Agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not obligate OSMRE or the Department of the Interior to award funding.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations that meet the following requirements:
 - a. Provide proof of non-profit IRS 501(c) (3) status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service of non-profit organizations and institutions.

- b. Demonstrate established access to AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (herein referred to as VISTA) positions through partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service or other intermediary organization.
- c. Manage and carry out all administrative functions associated with projects funded under this program, including maintaining all administrative records required for operation and management of the program.
- d. Exhibit the organizational capacity to oversee VISTA participants locally and across the country.
- e. Demonstrate a history of overseeing a national VISTA teams or programs.
- f. **Cost Sharing or Matching.** Cost Sharing not required.

2. Other Requirements.

- a. The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement requires recipients to maintain financial data to provide for the safeguard and accountability of Federal funds, to include written procedures for purchases, accounting system, cash management; and organizational structure in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.303 “Internal Controls”. Examples include the following:
 - Provide accurate, current, and complete financial information about Federal awards and sub-awards.
 - Maintain records that adequately identify the sources of funds for federally assisted activities and the purposes for which the award was used, including authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, outlays or expenditures, and any program income.
 - Accounting records must be supported by source documentation such as canceled checks, paid bills, payrolls, and time and attendance records.
 - Maintain effective control over and accountability for all cash, real and personal property, and other assets under the award; adequately safeguard those assets; and ensure that they are used only for authorized purposes.
- b. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that proposed budget costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable; in accordance 2 CFR § 200.403 “Factors Affecting Allowability of Costs”, 2 CFR § 200.404 “Reasonable Costs” and 2 CFR § 200.405 “Allocable Costs”.
- c. **Suspension and Debarment:** Funds will not be awarded to any applicant that is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily exclude from cover transactions by any Federal debarment or agency,

or are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity.

No funds will be awarded to recipients who have within a three-year period preceding this proposal have been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, and making false statements or receiving stolen property.

- d. **Applicant Violator System (AVS):** All applicants, organization officers and others having authority to make study related decisions will be screened through the Applicant Violator System (AVS). AVS is an automated information system owned and operated by OSMRE that contains information on applicants, permittees, operators, application and permit records, as well as unabated or uncorrected environmental violations of SMCRA.
- e. **Federal Performance and Integrity System (FAPIIS):** Prior to any award of Federal funds that exceeds \$150,000; the Federal award agencies will review and consider information about the applicant that is in Federal Performance and Integrity System FAPIIS. Applicants may review and comment on information about them in FAPIIS and the agency will consider any applicant comments in making award decisions; and address post-award grant reporting requirements and inform applicants about post-award FAPIIS reporting requirements, in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.212(c)(5) “Reporting a Determination that a non-Federal Entity is not Qualified for a Federal Award”.
- f. **Other Uniform Guidance requirements:** All non-Federal entities must comply with the Uniform Guidance requirements of Self-Reporting in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.112 “Conflict of Interest”, Appendix XII and 2 CFR § 200.331 “Subrecipients Monitoring Requirements”.
- g. **Delinquency on Federal Debt:** Any organization or individual that is indebted to the United States, and has a judgment lien filed against it for a debt to the United States, is ineligible to receive a Federal grant. Applicants are required to indicate in their applications if they are delinquent on any Federal debt. By signing the SF-424, the applicant is certifying that they are not delinquent on federal debt in accordance with OMB Circular A-129. Examples of relevant debt include delinquent payroll or other taxes, audit disallowances, guaranteed and direct student loans, benefits that were overpaid, etc. If an applicant is delinquent on federal debt, they should attach an explanation that includes proof that satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Agency to which the debt is owed. If the applicant discloses a delinquency, OSMRE may not award the grant until the debt is satisfied or satisfactory arrangements are made with the agency to which the

debt is owed. In addition, once the debt is repaid or satisfactory arrangements made, and it will continue to consider that delinquency when determining whether the applicant would be responsible with respect to an OSMRE grant, if awarded.

Anyone who has been judged to be in default on a Federal debt and who has had a judgment lien filed against him or her should not be listed as a participant in an application for an OSMRE grant until the judgment is paid in full or is otherwise satisfied. No funds may be rebudgeted following an award to pay such an individual. The OSMRE will disallow costs charged to awards that provide funds to individuals in violation of this requirement.

- h. **Mandatory Disclosures:** The non-Federal entity or applicant for a federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.113 “Mandatory Disclosures”. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in including suspension or debarment. (See also 2 CFR § 180 “OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)”; 2 CFR § 376 “Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension”; and 31 USC § 3321 “Disbursement Authority in the Executive Branch”. Submission is required for all applicants and recipients, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the DOI Office of Inspector General (OIG) all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of Inspector General
Attention: Fraud Hotline
1849 C Street NW – Mail Stop 4428
Washington, D.C. 20240
Website: www.doioig.gov
Phone Hotline: Toll Free 1 (800) 424-5081
In Washington DC area: (202) 208-5300

- i. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.300 “Statutory and National Policy Requirements”, applicants must comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, 2 CFR § 170 “Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information”.
- j. Applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in the Federal awarding agency returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude the Federal awarding agency from making a Federal award.

D. Application and Submission Information:

1. **Address to Request Application Package.** The application is available at www.grants.gov under NOFO number S18AS00004.
2. **Content and Format of Application Submission.** The application must contain the following:
 - a. **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance.** The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.
 - SF-424, Item 12, must list the NOFO number 2018 S18AS00004
 - SF-424, Item 18, must list the total Federal budget amount requested for the entire project.
 - b. **SF-424 A, Budget Narrative.** The Budget information must reflect anticipated expenses for the project, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustment.
 - c. **SF- 424 B, for Non-Construction Programs.**
 - d. **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.**
3. **Application Format**
 - a. **Paper, E-mail and Facsimile (fax) Submissions.** Will not be accepted.
 - b. **Figures, Graphs, Images, and Pictures.** Must be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
 - c. **Font.** Easy to read font (12-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
 - d. **Page Limit.** The page limit of the Application Package must not exceed a total of 30 pages not including the required forms. The Technical Proposal for Applications is limited to fifteen (15) pages. Resumes are also excluded from the page count.
Page size. 8 ½ inches by 11 inches
 - e. **Application language:** English
 - f. **Application Replacement Pages.** Applicants may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once an application has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new application that must be received by OSMRE by the submission deadline.
 - g. **Cover Sheet:** Reference the non-profit, OSMRE VISTA Program Opportunity Number S18AS00004.
4. The full proposal must include the main documents and supplementary documents described below:
 - a. **Technical Proposal.** The technical Proposal is a document of no more than 15 pages. It must describe in depth the scope of the proposal, its goals, methods, its schedule, personnel working on the project their qualification and the instructional capabilities of the applicant.
 - b. **Executive Summary.** A concise summary/abstract of the proposed effort. The project summary/abstract must contain a summary of the proposed activity

suitable for dissemination to the public. It must be a self-contained document that identifies the name of the applicant, the project director/principal investigator(s), the project title, the objectives of the project, a description of the project, including methods to be employed, the potential impact of the project (i.e., benefits, outcomes), and major participants (for collaborative projects). The Executive Summary must not exceed one (1) single-sided page and counts toward the page limit of the Technical Proposal.

- c. **Problems, Solutions and Technical Approach.** This is a description of the methods through which the goals of the OSMRE VISTA Program will be achieved. This section must explain how the awardee will be able to address the needs of the program, the way in which these needs will be met, and the benefits for the approach taken.
- d. **Statement of Work and Potential Impact of the Results.** This is a complete statement of work to meet the approach that directly addresses the information described in the Problems, Solutions and Impact Statement of the Technical Proposal. The statement of work must include a schedule of milestones for the overall project, the applicant's plan to manage the project tasks, and metrics for measuring the success of the proposal.
- e. **Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel and Resources Availability.** This is a description of the qualifications, proposed roles, and level of planned effort of the participants, including the proposed role of the program leader, key personnel and staff. A resume of the program leader is required. A description of the applicant's access to the necessary resources to accomplish the proposed objectives must be included.
- f. **Budget Narrative.** (This does not count toward the page limit). The Budget Narrative must provide a detailed breakdown of each of the object class categories as reflected on the SF-424A. The budget justification must address all of the budget categories (personnel, fringe benefits, equipment, travel, supplies, other direct costs and indirect costs) for which Federal funds are requested. The written justification must include the necessity and the basis for each cost. Proposed funding levels must be consistent with the project scope, and only allowable costs must be included in the budget. Information on allowable cost is available in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200.
 - **Personnel** – At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel must include the following: name, job title, commitment of effort on the proposed project in terms of average number of hours per week or percentage of time, salary rate, total direct charges on the proposed project, description of the role of the individual on the proposed project and the work to be performed.

- **Fringe Benefits** – Fringe benefits must be identified separately from salaries and wages and based on rates determined by organizational policy. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (e.g., health insurance, parking, etc.) must not be charged under another cost category.
 - **Equipment** – Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the supplies line item. The budget justification must list each piece of equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the proposed project. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) charged directly to the award must be allocated to the award according to expected usage on the project.
 - **Travel** – For travel costs required by the recipient to complete the project, the budget justification for travel must include the following: destination; names and number of people traveling; dates and/or duration; mode of transportation, lodging and subsistence rates; and description of how the travel is directly related to the proposed project. For travel that is yet to be determined, please provide best estimates based on prior experience. If a destination is not known, an approximate amount may be used with the assumptions given for the location of the meeting.
 - **Supplies** – Provide a list of each supply, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project.
 - **Contracts/Subawards** – Each contract or subaward must be treated as a separate item. Describe the services provided and the necessity of the subaward or contract to the successful performance of the proposed project. Contracts are for obtaining normal goods and services. Subawardees perform part of the project scope of work. For each subaward, applicants must provide budget detail justifying the cost of the work performed on the project.
 - **Other Direct Costs** – For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, please list the cost, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award.
- g. **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.** If indirect costs are included in the proposed budget, provide a copy of the approved negotiated agreement if this rate was

h. **Resumes of Key Personnel.** A resume for the program leader is required. This individual is considered key personnel to the project. Resumes of additional key personnel may be supplied. Resumes are limited to two pages per individual.

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E. Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides instruction for the submittal of applications and outlines the procedure for the receipt of application by OSMRE.

1. Electronic Delivery

OSMRE is participating in the Grants.gov to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. OSMRE requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Instructions: Read the instructions below about registering to apply for OSMRE funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

- a. **Obtain a DUNS Number:** All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>
- b. **Register with SAM:** All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

- c. **Create a Grants.gov Account:** The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>
- d. **Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:** A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>
- e. **EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:** After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the Ebiz POC. The Ebiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>.
- f. **Track Role Status:** To track your role request, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

3. **Electronic Signature:**

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

4. **How to Submit an Application to OSMRE via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each notice of funding opportunity announcement (NOFO), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- a. **Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- b. **Complete a Workspace:** Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.
 - **Adobe Reader:** If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
- **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other
- **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
- **Track a Workspace Submission:** After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

5. **Applicant Support:**

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov for questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist your organization with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

6. **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

Online Submission. All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 12, 2018. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When OSMRE successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by OSMRE

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

7. **Amendments**

Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendments by e-mail or may request copies from Proud Adams by telephone at 202-208-2230 or by e-mail to padams@osmre.gov. Late applications will neither be reviewed nor considered.

F. **Application Review Information**

1. Evaluation Criteria

The criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the OSMRE VISTA Program projects are as follows:

Criterion 1: ACCESS TO VISTA POSITIONS (15 Possible Points)

The extent to which:

- a. The applicant clearly shows how the organization will receive VISTA positions from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) or other intermediate organization.
 - The applicant must state the minimum and maximum number of positions available.
 - The applicant will specify the type of positions received from CNCS. For example, cost-share positions or Education Award only positions.
- b. The applicant identifies the CNCS National Performance Metrics on which the program will report.
 - The application will demonstrate how the performance metrics data will be collected and assessed.

Criterion 2: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY – (25 Possible Points)

The extent to which:

- a. The applicant describes the organization's knowledge and experience administering VISTA programs.
 - The application addresses how the organization is qualified to manage the administrative logistics of the program, including correspondence, budgeting, payroll, management, and travel coordination.
 - The application states past work experience related to program administration, stipend payment to Members and expense reimbursement.
 - The applicant demonstrates past experience and success in running a multi-state VISTA program.
- b. The application describes the organization's human capital, technical resources, and skills to accomplish the administrative tasks necessary for the success of the program.
 - The applicant must submit an organizational chart, which clearly highlights key personnel.
- c. The applicant has conducted process and outcome evaluations and has used evaluation results for organizational learning and continuous improvement.

Criterion 3: PROGRAM DESIGN (30 Possible Points)

The extent to which:

- a. The applicant clearly states its qualification to develop and implement strategic recruitment plans and explains how it will advertise program opportunities to qualified individuals.
 - The application demonstrates recruitment from traditionally underserved communities, including low-income and disadvantaged populations.
 - The applicant discusses how they build and maintain relationships with colleges, universities, and other organizations, particularly institutions serving underrepresented groups, to recruit participants from diverse backgrounds.
 - The applicant must demonstrate ability to recruit VISTA Members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.
 - The applicant clearly identifies a strategy for recruiting individuals for the OSMRE/VISTA Program who have the appropriate background qualifications and skill set.
 - The application discusses the organization's coordination in receiving applications, interviewing, and hiring participants in a timely manner.
- b. The applicant describes its plan for developing and recruiting host sites for OSMRE VISTA members to serve:
 - Applicant states experience in working with community organization to develop VISTA projects.
 - Applicant must clearly identify a strategy for developing VISTA projects that fall in line with the objectives and goals of OSMRE.
- c. The applicant describes outreach and program marketing print and web publication strategies that will be used in supporting and promoting the program.
- d. The application describes the human capital, technical resources, and skills of the organization to accomplish outreach, program marketing, Member and supervisor support, and any other necessary tasks associated with the program design and success.
- e. The applicant discusses past work experience related to the program design.

- f. The applicant clearly lays out proposed performance measures to identify the success and impact of the program.
 - The application demonstrates previous examples of performance and measure of success.
 - The application must state how the organization assesses success, and how often assessments are performed.

Criterion 4: COST EFFECTIVENESS / BUDGET ADEQUACY (20 Possible Points)

To the extent that:

- a. The budget is submitted and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
 - Budget lists the cost per Member, support staff, training and relevant cost.
- b. The budget narrative/justification clearly documents how each line item is calculated and why each line item request supports the goals and activities of the proposed project.
- c. The applicants budget narrative must:
 - Identify the non-OSMRE funding and resources necessary to support the project.

2. Review and Selection Process

- a. Proposals, reports, documents and other information related to applications submitted to OSMRE and/or relating to financial assistance awards issued by OSMRE may be reviewed and considered by Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel who have entered into nondisclosure agreements covering such information, when applicable.
- b. **Initial Screening.** All applications received in response to this NOFO will be reviewed to determine whether they are eligible, complete, and responsive to the requirements of the NOFO and all required documents/forms have been submitted.
- c. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive based on the initial screening will be eliminated from further review. However, OSMRE, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing non-substantive information that can easily be rectified or cured.
- d. All applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection processes outlined below.

- e. OSMRE will convene a merit review panel with three (3) objective designated individuals knowledgeable about the VISTA Program.
- f. Application will be scored based on the evaluation criteria (see Section E. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.
- g. OSMRE reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards. This may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs. Additionally, OSMRE may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information. OSMRE reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the applicant.
- h. OSMRE may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any particular application. In some cases, OSMRE may ask applicants to consider combining projects. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the OSMRE designated representatives.
- i. The Selecting Official, or designee will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the merit reviewer's evaluations and relevance to the objectives described in the VISTA Program application selections.
- j. **Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants:** Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.
- k. **Retention of Unsuccessful Applications.** For paper applications, one (1) of each non-selected application will be retained for three (3) years for record keeping purposes and the other two (2) copies will be destroyed. After three (3) years, the remaining copy will be destroyed. For electronic applications, an electronic copy of each non-selected application will be retained for at least three (3) years for record keeping purposes.
- l. **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.** After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official and prior to the issuance of an award, the OSMRE Grants Management Division will conduct an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualification or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by OSMRE may consider: the financial stability of an applicant; quality of the applicant's management systems; an applicant's history of performance; previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant; the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

- m. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that correspond to the degree of risk may be applied by the OSMRE Grants Officer pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.207. In addition, OSMRE reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of the applicant.

G. Federal Award Administration Information

1. **Notices Federal Award:** Successful applicant will receive a written agreement notifying them of the award. This agreement will provide information pertaining programmatic and financial reporting requirements. In addition, terms and condition pertaining to managing the agreement will be provided. This document will also include, key contact associated with the award.
2. **Electronic Funds Transfer:** Recipient will be required to establish and account in Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), where OSMRE will disburse funding by means of an electronic funds transfer. The ASAP Account Settlement Report for the ASAP system should be reference to reconcile with internal accounting system to completed the quarterly SF-425.
3. **Reports:** Financial reports are due quarterly. The financial report (form SF-425) submitted to OSMRE will be a summary of expenditures represented in financials from the OSMRE/AmeriCorps Program and will correspond to the calendar quarter: December 31, March 31, June 30 and, September 30. Reports will be due with 30 days after the end as outlined by 2 CFR § 200.327 “Financial Reporting” and 2 CFR § 200.328 “Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance”. A final financial report is due within 90 day after the end of the project period.
4. **Programmatic reports are due quarterly:** The programmatic report requirements include the Quarterly Reports from each OSMRE/AmeriCorps Member and the Quarterly OSMRE/AmeriCorps Team Summary, which includes a summary of the work of Members of the OSMRE/AmeriCorps Team as well as the OSM-51 Performance Report and Program Narrative Statement. Dates due will correspond to calendar quarter: December 31, March 31, June 30 and, September 30. Reports are due thirty (30) calendar days after the end of the applicable reporting period end date, as outlined by 2 CFR § 200.327 “Financial Reporting” and 2 CFR § 200.328 “Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance”. A final financial report is due within 90 day after the end of the project period.
5. **Audits:** In accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR § 200 Subpart F “Audit Requirements”, non-Federal entities that expend financial assistance of \$750,000 or more in Federal awards must have a single or a program-specific audit conducted for that year. Non-Federal entities that expend less than \$750,000 a year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR§ 200.503 “Relation to Other Audit Requirements.”

6. **Records:** Records will be maintained in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR § 200.333 2 CFR § 200.335 “Record Retention and Access”.
7. **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006:** In accordance with 2 CFR 170, all recipients of a Federal award made on or after October 1, 2010, are required to comply with reporting requirements under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. L. No. 109-282). In general, all recipients are responsible for reporting sub-awards of \$25,000 or more. In addition, recipients that meet certain criteria are responsible for reporting executive compensation. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding. Also see the Federal Register notice published September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55663 available here <http://go.usa.gov/hKnQ>.

H. OSMRE Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

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