

**Wounded Warrior Service Dog Program (WWSDP)
FY2019 Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
Program Announcement (PA) Number VP-19-001**

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This FOA establishes eligibility, procedures, and requirements for the FY2019 WWSDP. Applicants must be nonprofit organizations who have been established for the purpose of training and providing service dogs. Pass-through entities will not be considered. Organizations should be able to tailor a comprehensive plan to establish and operate a program to provide assistance dogs to Service Members and/or Veterans with disabilities. A prime tenant of the WWSDP is to support Service Members and/or Veterans across diverse geographic regions and population demographics through nonprofit organizations committed to advancing the Service Dog industry through continued learning, innovative training programs, and superior industry standards.

Beginning in FY2015, Congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for the WWSDP to fund a competitive grants program. This program continues in FY2019 under the authority of the Defense Health Program, Operations & Maintenance, therapeutic service dog training program. The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is authorized by 10 U.S.C. 2113(g)(1)(A) to make grants to any nonprofit entity. Historically, USU has solicited grant applications from nonprofit institutions committed to connecting service dogs with service members and veterans. USU obligated \$1,000,000 in FY2015, \$5,000,000 in FY2016, and FY2017 and \$10,000,000 in FY2018 to carry out this program. USU intends to award multiple, 12-month grants (subject to availability of funding) to eligible nonprofit organizations to continue this program in FY2019.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

USU plans to obligate approximately \$10,000,000 in grants to successful applicants for the WWSDP in FY2019. The number of grants to be awarded and the amount of funding per grant is to be determined based upon the quality of the applications. On average, since the Program's inception, USU awarded grants to 21 Recipients with an average funding amount of approximately \$251,500 per award with awards ranging from \$45,000 to \$586,800. Funding provided through this program is not intended to finance new programs or initiatives, but to support the operations of existing programs. **The planned period of performance for the FY2019 WWSDP is June 2019 through June 2020.** Past Recipients of WWSDP grants are eligible to apply and compete for FY2019 WWSDP grants; however, applications for renewal or supplementation of existing awards will not be considered.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

The WWSDP is limited to nonprofit organizations subject to 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) of the tax code. Applicants must be nonprofit organizations who have been established for the purpose of training and providing service dogs. Pass-through entities will not be considered. Organizations should be able to tailor a comprehensive plan to establish and operate a program to provide assistance dogs to Service Members and/or Veterans with disabilities. An applicant's failure to meet eligibility criteria by the application deadline will preclude USU from making an award to the applicant.

1. *Eligible Applicants.* To be eligible to receive a grant, an organization must—
 - a. Have an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM), <https://www.sam.gov> showing the applicant is a nonprofit organization;
 - b. Train and provide assistance dogs to Service Members and/or Veterans with disabilities free-of-charge;
 - c. Not outsource essential training or animal husbandry services. Pass-through entities will not be considered;
 - d. Submit a responsive application packet by the stated deadline.
2. *Cost Sharing or Matching.* There is no required cost sharing, matching or cost participation for this opportunity.
3. *Other.* Organizations that have been found to be in violation of a Federal statute are ineligible. Assistance dog organizations that have affiliated or related organizations serving service members and veterans may submit only one application under this grant program.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. *Address to Request Application Package.* Everything needed to apply is available on National Institutes of Health (NIH) Application Submission System & Interface for Submission Tracking (ASSIST). See Section D.5. for instructions on ASSIST.
2. *Content and Form of Application Submission.* All applications shall be submitted as outlined in this FOA. The Program Announcement (PA) number for this FOA is VP-19-001. ***All applications must be submitted electronically through the NIH ASSIST portal.*** Successful applicants should consider the evaluation criteria listed under Section E when developing their applications. Applications must be clearly divided into and address the following elements:
 - a. **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424);** (*Applicants must enter the PD/PI's Commons Username into the 'Applicant Identifier' field of the SF-424 document. Instructions for Commons are below.*);
 - b. **Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form;**
 - c. **Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A);** (*Ensure total proposed budget is broken out by quarter under Section D (Forecasted Cash Needs) 13 (Federal). Do not complete any Non-Federal sections as no cost sharing, matching or cost participation is required.*);
 - d. **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B);**
 - e. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL lobbying form)** (*Complete this optional form if applicable*);

- f. **Budget Narrative Attachments:** Proposed budget and justification. All proposed costs (both direct and indirect) identified on page 2 of the SF-424A must be described and justified in detail. Cost estimates must be associated with the placement of Service Members and/or Veterans with assistance dogs during the grant period of performance. All budgets must be in whole US Dollars. Details and cost estimates must be provided for each applicable Object Class Category (*i.e. budget category*). Each budget category should have enough detail to show how the budget category estimate was arrived at or determined. Budget categories include the following elements (as applicable to each applicant):
- a. Personnel (labor with the percentage of effort for each individual)
 - b. Fringe Benefits (provide rate and what budget categories it is being applied to)
 - c. Travel (including estimated cost details for each trip – number of travelers, number of days, estimated costs for lodging, transportation, *per diem*, etc.)
 - d. Equipment (list items, quantity and estimated costs)
 - e. Supplies (list items, quantity and estimated costs)
 - f. Contractual (estimated costs for subcontracts, consultants, *etc.* and what they are for)
 - g. Construction – Not Applicable
 - h. Other (Trainer training, dog purchases, veterinary expenses, housing, etc.)
 - i. Indirect Charges (If the applicant is electing to use the *de minimus* 10% indirect cost rate, it must be stated. If not, provide rate and what budget categories it is being applied to)
- g. **Project Narrative Attachments:** The project narrative may not exceed 10 pages. Keep narrative concise and emphasize details over anecdotal or general statements. The narrative must be in English and pages numbered sequentially. All documents must be single-spaced, 12-point Calibri (or similar) font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins. All attachments must be submitted in PDF format (.pdf). No other file types will be accepted by ASSIST. The narrative must clearly address the applicant's assistance dog program and include a description or discussion of each of the following elements:
- i. How Service Members and/or Veterans in need of assistance dogs are identified and contacted and a description of how the application and selection process works. Include how a Service Member and/or Veteran provides documentation of their disability.
 - ii. Approach to accommodating Service Members and/or Veterans from outside the Applicant Organization's commuting area including their accessibility to the Applicant Organization. Identify the specific underserved community and/or areas.
 - iii. After-care and support services provided to Service Members and/or Veterans and their placed dogs.
 - iv. Training programs for both the dogs and the Service Members and/or Veterans including any public access tests used to certify placed dogs with their Service Members and/or Veterans.
 - v. Selection requirements for choosing trainers as well as resumes for each trainer (include academic degrees, certifications, continuing education, professional development, etc. as appropriate).
 - vi. Training facilities and/or animal housing facilities.

- vii. Applicant Organization's commitment to humane standards for animals (include any comparable standards such as of the International Guide Dog Foundation (IGDF), or Assistance Dogs International, Inc., etc.).
- viii. Applicant Organization's past performance related to the placement and retention of assistance dogs with Service Members and/or Veterans.

3. *Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).* Each applicant is required to:

- a. be registered in SAM (<https://www.sam.gov>) before submitting an application;
- b. provide a valid unique entity identifier (e.g. DUNS number) in its application; and
- c. continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which the applicant has an active Federal award or application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

USU cannot make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time USU is ready to make a Federal award, USU may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

4. *Submission Dates and Times.* Applications are due electronically by **11:59pm Eastern Time on 01 March 2019**. This is the date/time applications must be submitted in order to be considered for an award. Late applications will neither be reviewed nor considered.

5. *Applicant Organization Registration in eRA Commons, Designation of PI Role, and Initiating an Application in ASSIST.*

USU utilizes NIH ASSIST as its application submission portal. ASSIST is a web-based system used to prepare applications using the SF424 form set and to submit electronically through Grants.gov to NIH and other participating agencies. Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Hand-carried, US Mail, or other hard-copy submissions will not be accepted.

NOTE: In order to submit an application through ASSIST each applicant organization must be registered in eRA Commons. Furthermore, each application requires an applicant contact who is designated with a "PI" role by the applicant institution.

- a. If your organization is not registered in eRA, [NIH provides instructions to register your organization in eRA](#). It is advisable to designate the Signing Official (SO) role in eRA to the same person who is the signing official in grants.gov.
- b. Once your organization has registered in eRA, you must create a Commons account with a PI role for the contact person of your application. [NIH provides instructions to create Commons accounts and assign user roles](#).
- c. After you have created a Commons accounts with a PI role for the lead contact person, you can initiate an application in ASSIST, by using the FOA # VP-19-001.

6. *Funding Restrictions.*

- a. Budgeted costs must be allowable, allocable and reasonable (*in accordance with Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards 2CFR 200 - parts 200.403, 200.404 and 200.405*).
- b. Budget items not related to support for the operations of existing programs will not be approved (*e.g. construction costs for new facilities, equipment purchases greater than \$5,000, etc.*).
- c. Pre-award costs are not authorized and will not be reimbursed.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. *Criteria.* Applications will be evaluated for technical merit and programmatic relevance through a peer review process. Each application will receive a separate score for each of technical criteria below.

- a. Technical merit criteria includes:
 - i. Reviewers will consider the quality of the applicant's training programs for both the dogs and the Service Members and/or Veterans
 - ii. Reviewers will consider the selection requirements for, and the experience, expertise, and stability of, the trainers.
 - iii. Reviewers will consider the adequacy of the training facilities and/or animal housing facilities and they will assess the applicant's approach to humane standards for animals including a review of the standards employed.
 - iv. Reviewers will consider whether the proposed budget is appropriate/balanced for the proposed work and whether the budget categories are realistic and justified for the proposed effort.
- b. An internal programmatic review committee will evaluate applications for programmatic relevance using the criteria below. Programmatic relevance criteria includes:
 - i. Reviewers will look at relevance and feasibility of the applicant's proposed approach and consider how well the overall application meets the prime tenant of the WWSDP - to support Service Members and/or Veterans across diverse geographic regions and population demographics through nonprofit organizations committed to advancing the Service Dog industry through continued learning, innovative training programs, and superior industry standards.
 - ii. Reviewers will consider past performance related to the placement and retention of assistance dogs with Service Members and/or Veterans.
 - iii. Reviewers will evaluate the proposed budget to assess the reasonableness for the proposed effort.

2. *Review and Selection Process.* Applications will undergo a two-tiered review process consisting of technical merit review, conducted by members of an external review board and a programmatic review, conducted by an internal programmatic review committee. An external review committee will evaluate applications for technical merit using a 9-point rating scale scoring system (1 = exceptional; 9 = poor) in whole numbers (no decimals) for Overall Impact and Criterion scores for all applications. The expectation is that scores of 1 or 9 will be used less frequently than the other scores. 5 is for a good medium-impact application and considered an average score. No formula is used to derive the overall impact score from the individual criterion scores, and reviewers are instructed to weigh the different criteria as they see fit in deriving their overall scores. Note that an application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major impact and thus, deserve a high impact score. Reviewers will score an application as presented in its entirety, and may not modify their scores on the assumption that a portion of the work proposed will be deleted or modified. Those applications found to have technical merit will then be reviewed by the programmatic review committee. The results of the technical and programmatic review committees will be presented to a Selecting Official who will make final funding determination on the number of grant awards issued and the amounts to be awarded under each grant.

3. *Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates.* The Government anticipates making awards no later than 30 May 2019. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email after all grant awards have been made.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. *Federal Award Notices.* Successful applicants will receive an email with a copy of the grant for their signature. After signing and returning to the USU Grants Officer for countersignature they will receive a final grant award. Work may begin only after the signed grant agreement is received by the Recipient. Applicants shall not seek grant funding reimbursement for dogs placed with disabled service members and veterans prior to receipt of award.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements.* All grant awards issued as a result of this opportunity will be subject to the DoD R&D General Terms and Conditions and Uniformed Services University General Terms and Conditions for Assistance Awards.

3. *Reporting.* There is no specified format for progress reports. Applicants selected for funding shall be required to submit two (2) comprehensive progress and financial reports (6-months interim and 12-months final report). Financial reports are to be prepared on the Federal Financial Report (SF-425) which can be downloaded from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) along with instructions for its use. Both reports shall be reviewed to ensure grant funds are used for the purposes stated in the grant application. The progress report shall include the status of any plans, processes or general elements found under D.2.g.i-viii of the Project Narrative above.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

For questions related to this opportunity, please contact the Grants Officer in the USU Acquisitions Directorate, via email at wwsdp-ggg@usuhs.edu.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement.

- I. Only a warranted Grants Officer can obligate the Federal Government.
- II. Recipients who do not achieve proposed outcomes or adhere to the terms and conditions of the Grant may not be eligible to compete in any similar future announcements.
- III. All participating organizations must agree to Government auditing, 6-months and 12-months progress and expense reports, and site visits by USU officials as needed.
- IV. Service Members and/or Veterans with disabilities must have their disability documented by their physician and provide that to the applicant/recipient organization before participating in the program.