



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RURAL COMMUNITY ASSETS FUND FY 2018-2019**

I. Background

Volunteer Florida is the Governor's lead agency for volunteerism and national service in Florida, administering more than \$32 million in federal, state, and local funding to deliver high-impact national service and volunteer programs in Florida. Volunteer Florida promotes and encourages volunteerism to meet critical needs across the state. Volunteer Florida also serves as Florida's lead agency for volunteers and donations before, during, and after disasters. For more information, visit: www.volunteerflorida.org.

II. Contract/Grant Period

Rural Community Assets Fund (RCAF) Proposals are due to Volunteer Florida on **Friday, August 17, 2018 at 5 p.m. EST**. The contract period begins on the date of contract execution and ends June 30, 2019. Volunteer Florida reserves the right to allocate funds based on internal programmatic and fiscal review. Grant award distribution is contingent upon funding availability.

III. Grant Overview

Florida's rural communities are uniquely resilient, but also face specific challenges related to adequate educational resources, necessary transportation and sustainable employment. Household income lags behind that of metropolitan areas, and poverty rates are significantly higher as identified by the following statistics:

- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS), the average per-capita income for Florida urban areas in 2016 was \$46,389. Per-capital income in rural areas was just \$33,741.¹
- Estimates from 2016 indicate a poverty rate of 14.6% in urban areas of the state, compared to 19.5% for rural areas.²
- The USDA's report notes that from 2012 to 2016, 12.5% of Florida's population in urban areas had not completed high school, compared to 21.1% of the population in rural areas.³

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^{1,2,4} State Fact Sheets. *United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service*. May 24, 2018, URL: https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?StateFIPS=12&StateName=Florida&ID=17854#Pf5a91dc529564a00b57cf229ff72a09e_2_39iT0



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Federal, state and local governments, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors continue to develop strategies to strengthen these communities.

Floridians can capitalize on an additional resource by leveraging existing human capital to meet essential local needs through volunteering.

Volunteer Florida's Rural Community Assets Fund (RCAF) will allow grantees to recruit, equip and mobilize volunteers in eligible rural areas across the state to address the acute educational needs of underserved children and youth.

Volunteer Florida will distribute up to a total of \$100,000, contingent upon availability of funds, for organizational and training support for grantees participating in the FY2018-2019 Rural Community Assets Fund program. Respondents may request between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The respondent must provide a one hundred percent (100%) cash or in-kind match, to be verified during the contract period. See Appendix C- Budget and Match Information for additional information about match requirements.

Grantees will receive comprehensive training, funding for program enhancements and ongoing technical assistance, and coaching to establish or strengthen existing volunteer programs.

The Request for Proposals, Appendices A-D and other relevant RCAF information are available online: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.

IV. Eligibility

Respondents may be public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities (e.g., states, cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; or Indian Tribes.

Respondents must have experience meeting educational needs for underserved children or youth in early childhood education settings or the K-12 education system. This experience need not be in an eligible rural area, but programming funded through RCAF must occur in an eligible rural area. (Continued)



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Respondents must currently have or plan to have a service location in, or volunteers deployed to, an eligible rural area.

RCAF funding must only be used to support services for underserved children and youth residing in eligible rural areas.

It is not necessary that the organization as a whole provide educational programming exclusively. Additionally, respondents are not required to serve all education levels. Organizations may also provide educational programming to children and youth who have left school, if the intent is to move students toward high school graduation or readiness for postsecondary education without remediation.

Counties and communities eligible for RCAF funding must meet either the definition of “rural community” outlined in F.S. 288.0656, or as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural-Urban Continuum Codes 3-9. See Appendix A- Eligible Counties and Municipalities: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.

V. Volunteer Management Practices

Successful respondents will demonstrate the capacity to effectively engage and track volunteers and strengthen organizational volunteer management practices by developing at least two of the eight functions listed below. These areas are considered necessary components of an effectively managed volunteer program, as defined in the report “Volunteering Reinvented: Human Capital Solutions for the Nonprofit Sector.”⁴

- 1) Market Research and Community Needs Assessments
- 2) Strategic Planning to Maximize Volunteer Impact
- 3) Recruiting and Marketing to Prospective Volunteers
- 4) Interviewing, Screening, and Selecting Volunteers
- 5) Orienting and Training Volunteers
- 6) Ongoing Supervision and Management
- 7) Recognition and Volunteer Development
- 8) Measuring Outcomes and Evaluating the Process

⁴ Corporation for National and Community Service, 2007, page 4.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/07_0719_volunteering_reinvented.pdf



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VI. Special Consideration

Special scoring consideration will be given to respondents providing educational programming centered on college preparation and on-time graduation in one of the following areas:

- 1) Academic Achievement: Mentoring, tutoring, test preparation or study skills.
- 2) Financial Management: College affordability, financial aid opportunities or financial literacy skills.
- 3) Advising: Career exploration and planning, professional development or range of post-secondary options.

VII. Volunteer Florida Technical Assistance Conference Call

Volunteer Florida will host a technical assistance conference call about the Rural Community Assets Fund proposal process on **Thursday, July 31, 2018 at 10:00 A.M. EST**. Interested individuals may join the meeting via GoToMeeting.com by computer, tablet or smartphone:

Click on the following link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/322940837>.

Individuals may join the meeting by phone using one of the following call-in numbers:

United States (Toll-free): 1 877 309 2073

United States: +1 (571) 317-129

Access Code: **322-940-837**

Individuals may join the meeting by video-conferencing system:

Dial: 67.217.95.2##322940837

Cisco devices: 322940837@67.217.95.2

GoToMeeting first-time users or those who would like to do so can complete a system check here: <https://link.gotomeeting.com/system-check>

To ensure that this funding process is carried out in a fair and equitable manner, all questions concerning the Proposal must be submitted to **RCAF@volunteerflorida.org**.

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VIII. Performance Measures

1) Program Capacity:

Grantees will show an increase in capacity in at least two areas over the course of the contract period:

- Number of children or youth served
- Number of volunteers recruited and/or retained
- Types of services offered to children or youth
- Number of services provided per children or youth

2) Proficiency in Volunteer Management

Practices: Grantees will:

- Show an increase in effective volunteer management practices as measured by the pre/post assessment in Appendix B (1 of 4) - Reporting Requirements: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.
- Establish or update a volunteer management plan, based on the volunteer management practices the grantee has identified to develop.

IX. Budget

Funds awarded to grantees are intended to be used for capacity building activities to develop or strengthen volunteer programs. **Respondents may request a minimum of \$5,000 up to a maximum of \$10,000 in funding. Respondents must provide a one hundred percent (100%) cash or in-kind match, to be verified during the contract period.** See Appendix C- Budget and Match Information for additional information about match requirements. Fifty percent (50%) of grant funding will be distributed at the beginning of the contract period, and the remaining fifty percent will be distributed halfway through the contract period. The Proposal Budget Worksheet must be completed in Microsoft Excel format and submitted as a component of the Proposal. See Appendix C- Budget and Match Information for a Budget Sample and the Proposal Budget Worksheet: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in the Proposal Narrative. Your budget narrative should provide a full explanation of costs including their purpose, justification, and the basis of your calculation. (Continued)



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Budget Categories:

- 1) Personnel Expenses– Include the portion of principal staff time attributed directly to the operation of the applicable program. List each staff position and a brief statement of responsibilities for each. For each position, also include the annual salary, and the percentage of staff time that will apply to the grant.
- 2) Personnel Fringe Benefits– Include costs of benefit(s) for each program staff member. You can identify and calculate each benefit or show cost as a percentage of all salaries. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list covered items separately.
- 3) Project Staff Travel– Describe the purposes for which staff will travel (other than training, see #7). Costs allowable are transportation, lodging, subsistence, and other related expenses for local and outside the project area travel. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. The standard mileage reimbursement should not exceed the state mileage rate unless a result of the respondent's policy and justified in the budget narrative.
- 4) Equipment– Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of \$2,000 (two thousand) or more per unit (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Include items that do not meet this definition in "Supplies". Supplies below. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purpose of the equipment.
- 5) Supplies– Include the funds for the purchase of consumable supplies and materials that do not fit the definition under "Equipment".
- 6) Contractual and Consultant Services– You may include costs for consultants related to the program's operations and outcomes. Where applicable, indicate the daily rate for consultants.
- 7) Training– You may include the costs associated with training of staff working directly for the program, especially training that specifically enhances staff program implementation and professional skills.

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This may include an estimate cost of the mandatory 2 day, 3 night RCAF training in Central Florida, November 5-7, 2018.

- 8) Other – These costs may include office space rental, utilities, and telephone and Internet expenses that are specifically used for participants, directly involve program staff, and are not part of the organization's indirect cost/admin cost. In addition, these costs may include criminal history checks of staff. If costs are shared with other projects or activities, you must prorate the costs equitably. List each item and provide a justification in the budget.

X. Technical Assistance and Training

Rural Community Assets Fund grantees will receive and be required to attend a comprehensive training to establish or strengthen volunteer programs. In addition, grantees will receive ongoing technical assistance and coaching. The Rural Community Assets Fund grantee training is mandatory and will be November 7-9, 2018 in Orlando. An estimate cost of the training may be included in the respondent's budget. Grantees are also required to participate in Volunteer Florida training webinars.

XI. Reporting

Successful grantees must report data associated with listed performance measures, such as number of volunteers engaged (new or retained), number of hours volunteers served, volunteer demographics, and schools served. This data must be submitted at the beginning of the contract period as a baseline, at mid-cycle, and at the end of the contract period. Successful grantees will also provide detailed accounting of expenses at mid-cycle and at the end of the contract period. Volunteer Florida will provide instructions, reporting guidelines and documentation information. See Appendix B - Reporting Requirements: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>. **No Appendix B reports should be completed by respondents.**

XII. Background Checks

Successful respondents will be required to complete background checks through the Dru Sjojin National Sex Offender Public Website for all volunteers.

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XIII. Rural Community Assets Fund Anticipated Timeline

- Request for Proposals opens – Monday, July 23, 2018
- Proposal technical assistance call – Tuesday, July 31, 2018 10 a.m. EST
- Proposals due to Volunteer Florida – Friday, August 17, 2018, 5 p.m. EST
- Proposal review and scoring – Tuesday, August 21, 2018 – Friday, August 24, 2018
- Notice of Intent to Award posting – Tuesday, August 28, 2018 9 a.m. – Friday, August 31, 2018 9 a.m.
- Proposal Clarifications – Tuesday, September 4, 2018 – Friday, September 7, 2018
- Contracts provided to successful respondents – Tuesday, September 11, 2018
- RCAF contract overview conference call – Wednesday, September 12, 10:30 a.m. EST
- Anticipated date of contract execution – Friday, September 14, 2018
- RCAF Training - required for grantees – November 5-7, 2018
- Contract period ends – June 30, 2019

XIV. Proposal Scoring Criteria

See Appendix C: Budget and Match Information and Appendix D: Proposal Narrative: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.

1) Cover Sheet, Project Demographics, Proposal Completion (12 points)

- a) The proposal includes a fully and accurately completed cover sheet with project demographics as listed.
- b) The proposal clearly indicates which two (at minimum) of the eight (8) steps or functions for effectively managing volunteers will be implemented or expanded by the project (see Section V. Volunteer Management Practices).
- c) The proposal clearly indicates the primary area(s) of volunteer engagement related to early childhood or K-12 educational programming, either existing or planned, for underserved children and youth.
- d) The respondent accurately completes the Proposal Narrative and Proposal Budget Worksheet according to Request for Proposal instructions.

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2) Purpose Narrative (35 points)

- a) The proposal clearly describes the existing early childhood or K-12 educational programming for children and youth that the organization performs, including number of students served, number of existing volunteers (if any), and site(s) where programming occurs, where staff is deployed and/or where volunteers are deployed.
- b) The proposal clearly describes how volunteers will be engaged in, and produce contributions to, early childhood or K-12 educational programming for underserved children and youth in eligible rural areas, specifically as a result of being awarded RCAF funds. The respondent lists the eligible site(s) where programming will occur. See Appendix A- Eligible Counties and Municipalities: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.
- c) The proposal clearly describes the proposed roles of leveraged volunteers.

3) Organizational Capacity (10 points)

- a) The proposal clearly describes the organization's experience, staffing, and management capacity to plan and implement the proposed program.
- b) The proposal fully explains the organization's infrastructure and experience managing grants.
- c) The proposal clearly describes how the respondent's organization, in implementation and management of its volunteer program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- d) The proposal clearly describes how the organization will comply with state rules and regulations related to prohibited and unallowable activities.

4) Special Consideration (3 points)

- a) If applicable, the proposal clearly describes the extent to which the program provides educational support centered on college preparation and on-time graduation in the areas of academic achievement, financial management or advising. (Continued)

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5) Performance Measures (10 points)

- a) The proposal clearly describes how performance measure targets will be met and tracked.
- b) The proposal clearly describes the equipment or software already acquired or needed that are directly related to the recruitment, support, management and retention of volunteers and tracking volunteer demographics/activities.
- c) Program Capacity: The proposal identifies at least two areas in which capacity will be increased over the course of the contract period, and provides a numerical estimate for each increase:
 - Number of children or youth served
 - Number of volunteers recruited and/or retained
 - Types of services offered to children or youth
 - Number of services provided per child or youth
- d) Proficiency in Volunteer Management Practices: The proposal indicates whether a volunteer management plan will be established or updated, and describes the two (at minimum) of the eight (8) steps or functions for effectively managing volunteers that will be incorporated or enhanced during the contract period, and why.

6) Budget and Budget Narrative (30 points)

- a) The proposal budget contains only allowable expenses and meets state cost allowance guidelines.
- b) The proposal and budget include a one hundred percent (100%) match that must be verifiable. The budget narrative clearly explains the source of funds, the type of contribution (cash/in-kind), and the amount as well as the intended purpose of the match. See Appendix C- Budget and Match Information for additional information about match requirements.
- c) The proposal is detailed and provides a full explanation of associated costs including their purpose, justification and the basis for the calculations. Calculations are presented in equation format, identifying the number of persons involved, cost per unit, etc. The proposal information corresponds to the budget worksheet.
- d) The proposal thoroughly explains how the proposed program budget reflects the program's goals and design as described in the Purpose Narrative section. (Continued)

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- e) The proposal states the organization's current budget, the percentage of the organization's budget this grant would represent, and how the organization will comply with fiscal compliance oversight.

XV. Instructions: Rural Community Assets Fund Proposal

The Rural Community Assets Fund (RCAF) Proposal consists of 2 parts: The Proposal Budget Worksheet (Appendix C) and the Proposal Narrative (Appendix D). **Both must be submitted, attached to ONE e-mail to Volunteer Florida according to the below instructions by Friday, August 17, 2018, 5 p.m. EST.** DO NOT attempt to change the formatting of the Proposal Budget Worksheet or the Proposal Narrative.

- 1) Review all instructions carefully.
- 2) Complete the Proposal Budget Worksheet using Microsoft Excel and the Proposal Narrative using Microsoft Word. Do **NOT** print and scan, handwrite or create portable document format documents (PDF) of either the Proposal Budget Worksheet or the Proposal Narrative.
- 3) Respond clearly and thoroughly to ALL prompts.
- 4) **NOTE FOR PROPOSAL NARRATIVE: If text is written beyond the end of the prompt text box (not visible), reviewers WILL NOT SCROLL WITHIN THE BOX TO VIEW ADDITIONAL TEXT. Respondents must use only the visible space for each prompt text box. Do NOT change formatting or the sizing of text boxes.**
- 5) Proposal Narrative certifications: Check the boxes agreeing with the background statement and the statement regarding the accuracy of the Proposal.
- 6) Insert electronic signatures and dates.
- 7) Review the Proposal Budget Worksheet and Proposal Narrative carefully.
- 8) E-mail your completed proposal (Proposal Budget Worksheet AND Proposal Narrative) to **RCAF@volunteerflorida.org**. Enter the name of your organization in the subject line, for example, "Helping Kids Foundation USA".

You must submit both the Proposal Budget Worksheet and the Proposal Narrative simultaneously. Once you have submitted your full proposal, you will receive an e-mail from Volunteer Florida within one (1) business day confirming receipt. If you do not receive e-mail confirmation within one (1) business day, your proposal was not submitted properly. (Continued)



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You may resubmit your proposal, unless the deadline has passed. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

The Request for Proposals, Appendices and other relevant RCAF information can be found here: <http://www.volunteerflorida.org/grants>.

Appendix A: Eligible Counties and Municipalities

Appendix B: Reporting Requirements (4): Pre-Assessment, Volunteer Demographics and Reporting, Data and Activities, Financial Report- Expense Doc. Report

Appendix C: Budget and Match Information

Appendix D: Proposal Narrative