



VOLUNTEER GENERATION FUND

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Grant Year 2026-2027

Funding opportunity	Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF)
Application deadline	September 8, 2026 5:00 pm EDT
Grant period	11-month period beginning November 1, 2026 and ending September 30, 2027
Anticipated funding	Up to \$300,000; up to \$20,000 per organization
Required match	50% match

Applications must be submitted to Volunteer Florida via the [Blackbaud Grantmaking online portal](#) no later than 5:00 PM EDT, September 8, 2026. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for funding. Grant award distribution as described herein is contingent upon funding availability. For the 2026-2027 contract period, 50% match is required.

I. Background

Volunteer Florida is the Governor's lead agency for volunteerism and national service in Florida, administering more than \$92 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: <https://www.volunteerflorida.org/>.

II. Contract/Grant Period

Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) proposals must be submitted to Volunteer Florida in the [Blackbaud Grantmaking online portal](#) by 5:00 pm EDT on September 8, 2026. The grant period is an 11-month period, beginning November 1, 2026 and ending September 30, 2027. Volunteer Florida reserves the right to allocate funds based on internal programmatic and fiscal review and availability of funding.

III. Grant Overview

Volunteer Florida administers the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF), an initiative of AmeriCorps that focuses on investments in volunteer engagement practices that strengthen entities' ability to increase recruitment and retention of volunteers to meet critical community needs through service. Volunteer Florida seeks to fund effective approaches that expand volunteering, strengthen the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit and retain skill-based volunteers, and develop strategies to use volunteers effectively to solve community problems. Specifically, Volunteer Florida seeks to support two types of organizations through the VGF funding: Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) or similar organizations and organizations engaging Veteran and military family volunteers.

Volunteer Florida seeks to build long-term capacity of nonprofits, Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COADs), Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs), and other volunteer-driven organizations through investments in volunteer engagement, organizational development, disaster preparedness, and resilience and recovery coordination. Funding may support the development and sustainability of LTRGs; the transition of LTRGs into

permanent COADs; or the strengthening of local volunteer and donation management capabilities before, during, and after disasters.

Volunteer Florida also seeks to expand the recruitment and engagement of volunteers, including Veterans and military family members, to support community resilience and disaster recovery efforts.

Volunteer Florida anticipates the availability of up to \$300,000 for an estimated twenty-five (25) organizations serving the needs of Floridians. All applicant organizations may request up to \$20,000 for the contract period.

Grants will be cost reimbursement only, where costs are reimbursed once they are paid. Subgrantees will submit monthly invoices for costs in the approved budget that were paid in that month and will be required to supply supporting documentation for all costs such as but not limited to timesheets, payroll documentation, invoices, and proof of payments. The same documentation will also be required to support the required match portion of the grant.

IV. Eligibility

Eligible entities must be public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; governmental entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; or Indian Tribes. If another entity serves as the project's fiscal agent, it must be an established 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization that agrees to accept donations on behalf of a group that does not have IRS tax exempt status. The applicant must be a Florida-based organization.

V. Fatal Criteria

Applications will not be reviewed for funding unless ALL of the following criteria are met:

- The application is submitted via the [Blackbaud Grantmaking online portal](#) and received by Volunteer Florida no later than 5:00 pm EDT on September 8, 2026. Proposals will not be accepted via email or hard copy.
- The applicant is a public or private 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, including faith-based and other community organization; an institution of higher education; a government entity (e.g., states, cities, counties, school systems, etc.); labor organization; partnership and consortium; or Indian Tribe.
- The applicant mobilizes or will mobilize volunteers to meet the mission of the organization.
- The application includes the selection of relevant performance measures.
- The applicant activities must be in compliance with prohibited activities, including those specified in the regulations at 45 CFR § 2520.65.
- The application requests the allowable grant amount up to \$20,000.
- The application provides 50% match of the grant request.
- The application includes a Budget on the Volunteer Florida Budget Template.

VI. Performance Measures

Successful applicants must opt in to the following performance measures:

- Number of volunteers recruited by organizations or participants.
- Number of hours volunteers will serve.

- A pre-/post-test assessment measuring organizational implementation of [effective volunteer management practices](#). Successful subgrantees will increase organizational volunteer management practices during the grant year in three or more areas.
 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
- Number of community projects and number of community members assisted.

Successful LTRG applicants must opt in to the following performance measures:

- Number of new or strengthened partnerships established with local emergency management, VOAD, faith-based, nonprofit, or other community organizations.
- Number of new organizations integrated into local disaster planning, preparedness, response, or recovery coordination activities.
- Number of organizational capacity-building products completed (strategic plans, risk assessments, sustainability plans, board development plans, or continuity plans).
- Number of community outreach and education activities conducted and number of residents engaged to increase disaster preparedness and community resiliency.
- Number of residents reached through disaster preparedness and resiliency outreach efforts.

VII. Budget

Funds awarded to LTRGs or similar organizations and to organizations engaging Veteran and military family volunteers are intended to be used for capacity building activities to develop or strengthen volunteer programs. Grants will be cost reimbursement only, where costs are reimbursed once they are paid and will require supporting documentation such as, but not limited to, timesheets, payroll documentation, invoices, and proof of payments. The same documentation will also be required to support the required match portion of the grant.

Examples of eligible capacity building activities may include strategic planning, board development, grant writing and resource development, volunteer management software, donation management systems, case management and project tracking systems, website development, volunteer and donation management planning, community needs assessments, risk assessments, cybersecurity improvements, COAD development, LTRG-to-COAD transition planning, volunteer recruitment and retention strategies, community outreach, and preparedness and resilience initiatives. Additional examples include: development of volunteer and donations management plans; development or update of spontaneous volunteer management procedures; strategic planning and sustainability planning; development of Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) procedures; participation in local emergency management planning and coordination activities.

Applicants may include the following budget categories only:

- Personnel Salaries and Fringe Benefit Expenses - Funds may be used to hire new personnel or support existing personnel for up to two (2) personnel positions. Capacity building activities are described in

the paragraph above and may also include developing or augmenting a volunteer program, grant writing, board development and the transition from LTRG to COAD.

- Employer paid fringe benefits can include: FICA, health insurance, workers' compensation, retirement, life insurance, dental insurance, and unemployment.
- Software - Funds may be used for software which is directly related to tracking donations and the recruitment, support, management, and retention of volunteers and tracking volunteer demographics and activities. Funds may also be used for the creation of a volunteer website for use of promoting volunteer opportunities, organizational information and any required volunteer forms.
- Training - Funds may be used to purchase memberships, subscription services, materials or other training opportunities/resources specifically to strengthen the organization's capacity and ability to engage volunteers (staff training) or properly train volunteers to support the applicant's programming (training for volunteers).
- Community Outreach - Funds may be used for organizational and community resilience activities designed to strengthen preparedness, recovery, and volunteer coordination capacity. Examples include: community outreach and volunteer recruitment campaigns; mass notification and volunteer communication systems; disaster preparedness and resilience training for staff and volunteers.

All applicants are required to submit their most recent audit report including the management letter and the schedule of findings and questioned costs, if applicable. Organizations without an audit, please upload Statements of Financial Position, and Statements of Revenues and Expenditures for your last two fiscal years.

Grantees are required to provide a 50% in-kind and/or cash match of the grant request and must list in the budget narrative the source(s) of funds that will be used.

The applicant should use the approved Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) Budget and Budget Narrative Template found on Volunteer Florida's website: <https://www.volunteerflorida.org/VGF-grant-opportunities/>

VIII. Reporting

Successful subgrantees will report to Volunteer Florida on Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) Performance Measures as specified herein, including number of volunteers engaged, hours served, volunteer demographics, the increase of organizational effective volunteer management practices, number of community projects, and number of community members assisted. LTRG subgrantees will also report on other, applicable emergency management performance measures, as described in this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

IX. Background Checks

Successful subgrantees will be required to complete an online training through AmeriCorps to appropriately handle all background checks.

Subgrantees are required to comply with AmeriCorps's National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC). The requirement applies to Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grantee staff who are considered "covered" under the NSCHC definitions (grantee or match share). All grantee staff that are covered individuals will have their background checks initiated on or before their first day of work. In general, this includes a National Sex Offender Registry check, State of Residency and an FBI fingerprint-based check. Volunteer Florida will be responsible for initiating, completing and considering all checks through the vendor, Truescreen.

Source National Service Criminal History Check (AmeriCorps Requirements)

<https://www.americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check>

X. Technical Assistance

Volunteer Florida will host a technical assistance conference call for the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) FY 2026-2027 funding opportunity. The technical assistance call is scheduled for **August 14, 2026 at 10:00 am EDT**.

Register at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/9OnTgFI4Sg6X4tttm4fr4w>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the webinar.

Please direct any questions to VGF@volunteerflorida.org.

XI. Timeline

- Application submission opens - **August 11, 2026**
- Application technical assistance call - **August 14, 2026**
- Application due - **September 8, 2026, 5:00 pm EDT**
- Application review and scoring - **September 11, 2026 – September 25, 2026**
- Clarification provided to applicants - **October 2, 2026**
- Final applications/budgets with clarification changes due - **October 9, 2026**
- Contracts provided to selected applicants – **October 30, 2026**
- Contract Start Date - **November 1, 2026**

XII. Resources

Volunteer Florida Available Grants: <https://www.volunteerflorida.org/VGF-grant-opportunities/> (Location for proposal information)

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Scoring Criteria

Grant Year 2026-2027

Application component	Points
Cover Sheet and Project Demographics	5
Executive Summary	0
Narrative	40
Organizational Capacity	10
Performance Measures	10
Budget and Budget Narrative	30
Audit	5

I. Cover Sheet and Project Demographics (5 points)

- The proposal includes a complete and accurate cover sheet and project demographics.
- The proposal clearly indicates the primary area(s) of volunteer engagement related to the AmeriCorps priority areas: disaster services or Veterans and military families.

II. Executive Summary (0 points)

The proposal should provide a brief overview of the organization and the applicant's project. Please use the following template:

The [Name of the organization] proposes to [1. Increase capacity of Name of LTRG or 2. Increase engagement of Veteran and/or military families volunteers]. (Name of organization) will have [number] volunteers, contributing (number) of hours who will [service activities the volunteers will be doing] in [the locations where the volunteers will serve]. In addition, [list one or more types of volunteer management practices] will be improved. Examples of anticipated improvements include: [list anticipated improvements]. At the end of the contract year, volunteers will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project].

III. Narrative (40 points)

- The proposal clearly describes the community problem/need.
- The proposal describes applicant's existing volunteer program and how volunteers will be engaged or expanded.
- The proposal clearly describes the proposed roles of volunteers in addressing the community problem/need.
- The proposal clearly describes how volunteers will produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.
- The proposal will describe a key area of service in one of the following AmeriCorps priority areas: Disaster Services or Veterans and Military Families.
- Applicants should briefly describe how the project will strengthen organizational capacity, volunteer engagement, preparedness, recovery, resilience, or disaster coordination capabilities within the

community. Applicants are encouraged to highlight any long-term improvements, partnerships, plans, systems, or technology that will remain in place after the grant period.

- The proposal discusses use of new technology that will improve overall organizational productivity, efficiency, or service to its volunteer or volunteer programs (if applicable per the budget).

IV. Organizational Capacity (10 points)

- The proposal clearly describes how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.
- The proposal clearly explains the organization's infrastructure and experience managing grants.
- The proposal clearly describes how the applicant's organization, in implementation and management of its volunteer program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- The proposal clearly describes how the organization will comply with federal and state rules and regulations, including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities.
- The proposal describes how the project will strengthen the long-term sustainability of the organization, including plans for continued operation, volunteer engagement, disaster coordination activities, and the transition of a Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) into a sustainable Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD), as applicable.
- The proposal clearly describes how the requested funding will build long-term organizational capacity and improve the community's ability to prepare for, respond to, recover from, or mitigate the impacts of disasters, as applicable.
- The proposal identifies specific systems, plans, partnerships, policies, technologies, or organizational improvements that will remain in place after grant funding ends and contribute to long-term community resilience, as applicable.

V. Performance Measures (10 points)

- The proposal opts in to the required Performance Measures and includes associated targets.
- The proposal includes number of volunteers recruited by organizations or participants.
- The proposal includes number of hours volunteers will serve.
- Applicant will participate in a pre-/post-test assessment measuring organizational implementation of effective volunteer management practices.
- The proposal describes how the Performance Measure targets will be met and tracked.
- The proposal describes the equipment or software which is directly related to the recruitment, support, management, and retention of volunteers and tracking volunteer demographics and activities.
- The proposal includes number of new or strengthened partnerships established with local emergency management, VOAD, faith-based, nonprofit, or other community organizations, as applicable.

VI. Budget Narrative (15 points)

- The budget narrative describes the different types of grants (local, state, or federal) the organization has received and managed.
- The budget narrative is detailed and provides a full explanation of associated costs, including their purpose, justification, and the basis for the calculations.

- The budget narrative calculations are presented in an equation format, identifying the number of persons involved, cost per unit, etc. All costs should be listed separately or individually.
- The budget narrative includes a 50% match and clearly explains the source of funds, the type of contribution (cash or in-kind), the amount, and the intended purpose of the match.
- The budget narrative provides the organization's current budget, percentage of the budget this grant would represent, and how it will comply with fiscal compliance oversight.

VII. Budget (15 points)

- The proposal includes an approved Volunteer Florida budget template.
- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors, and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- The Budget includes the required 50% match.
- The Budget contains only allowable expenses in the budget categories listed and meets both federal and State of Florida cost allowance guidelines.

VIII. Audit (5 points)

- 5 points - Audit for the most recent previous fiscal year with:
 - An unmodified audit opinion;
 - No material weaknesses;
 - No material litigation;
 - No material negative subsequent events and;
 - No ongoing concern issues noted.
- 3 points - Audit that is:
 - Two fiscal years old or;
 - That has one material weakness.
- 1 point - Internally prepared financial statements (balance sheet and income statement) for
 - The applicant's most recent previous fiscal year;
 - Must be deemed acceptable by Volunteer Florida's finance department.

IX. Proposal Submission

Complete the steps outlined in this section to submit the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) proposal via the [Blackbaud Grantmaking online portal](#).

Blackbaud Grantmaking Online Portal Application Submission Link: <https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/programs/861aee76-df52-4d8e-b43c-ce25d64413bb>

- Use the Blackbaud Grantmaking Online Portal Application Submission Link above to begin an application.
- Use an existing email address and password to log in or create an account.
- Click Start new application.
- Choose the appropriate organization listed or click on "Search organizations" to select another organization and enter a name or tax identification number. If not found, click "Add organization" to enter your organization information.
- Click select to begin the eligibility screening.

- Complete the four eligibility questions and click submit.
- If you answer “no” to any of these questions you will not be eligible to complete the full application.
- Once you have been determined eligible, click “Continue to application” to begin the full VGF application.
- Application information entered is saved automatically every few seconds. A blue box with a check and the word “Saved” will appear each time in the bottom left corner.
- You can click “Applications” at the top of the screen at any time to go out to the Blackbaud Grantmaking home screen. Click the “VGF - Application” hyperlink to return to your draft application submission from the home screen.
- From the home screen, click “Manage” then “Manage applicants” on your “Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) 2026-2027” draft application to grant access to additional users in your organization. Enter their email address and name to send them an invitation link. You can also transfer ownership from this screen and assign permissions to add users and receive Blackbaud notification emails.
- Use the [Blackbaud Grantmaking Online Portal](#) link to return to your draft application at any time. Click edit on your application in progress. DO NOT click start new application again.
- Click next at the bottom of your application or click the tabs at the top to navigate between the application components

Applicants must enter the following information:

Cover Sheet

- Organization Name
- Address
- Phone
- Website
- Tax ID
- Florida Region
- Application Type
- Mailing Address
- Type of Organization
- CEO name, title, e-mail, and phone number (add up to 3 organization leadership contacts)
- Name, title, e-mail, and phone number of the person submitting the proposal (add up to 3 application or project contacts)
- Name, title, e-mail, and phone number of fiscal contact (add up to 3 fiscal contacts), provide address of fiscal contact only if different from organization address

Project Demographics

- Project Title
- Cities and Counties Served
- VGF Primary Focus Area

Proposal Narrative and Organizational Capacity

- Complete the Executive Summary, Narrative, and Organizational Capacity following the instructions above.

Performance Measures

- Enter proposed targets for:
 - Number of volunteers recruited by organizations or participants
 - Number of hours volunteers will serve
- Choose at least three (3) management practices that are proposed to be increased during the grant year. See [Volunteering Reinvented: Human Capital Solutions for the Nonprofit Sector](#) publication for benefits and descriptions of each effective volunteer management practice.
- For LTRGs or Similar Organizations Only:
 - Enter proposed targets for all LTRG performance measures that reasonably align with the project proposal and can be reported on during the grant period

Budget and Budget Narrative

- Enter total requested amount from column D (VGF Share) and total requested match amount from column E (Grantee Share) of the completed budget template.
- Name the completed Budget Template (e.g. AgencyABC_VGF_BUDGET) and upload it to the [Blackbaud Grantmaking system](#).
- Name most recent audit report including the management letter and the schedule of findings and questioned costs (e.g. AgencyABC_VGF-AUDIT INFORMATION) and upload.
- Complete the budget narrative box using the instructions above.

Review and Submit

- Once all required sections are complete and required documents are uploaded, fully review the entire proposal.
- Any incomplete or missing required sections will be noted in red. Correct any missing information.
- When ready to submit click “Sign and Submit.”
- By electronic signature, applicant attests that they:
 - Understand that VGF grantees will be required to complete a three-part background check process consistent with the standards of AmeriCorps, the agency and the Volunteer Generation Fund National Service Criminal History Check Requirements.
 - Agree that to the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this proposal is true and correct. The governing body of this organization has duly authorized this proposal, and we will comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- You can type or upload an image of an electronic signature or use an electronic device to draw a signature on the application.
- Once submitted, status will change to “Awaiting Review.”
- Account owners and users with email notification permissions will receive an application submitted verification email. If you do not receive this email, your application might not have been properly submitted, or you do not have the appropriate permissions. Ensure the account owner has received this confirmation email.
- DO NOT cancel an application once submitted. If you have made errors or need to provide additional information, reach out to VGF@volunteerflorida.org for next steps.