
SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSIONS

A. Justification

A1. Need for Information Collection

The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) awards grants to states, institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, Indian tribes, and U.S. Territories to operate AmeriCorps State, AmeriCorps National, AmeriCorps NCCC, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Senior Corps programs.

RSVP is a federally administered national program of Senior Corps that engages persons 55 and older in volunteer service that meets community needs and provides enriching experiences to those who serve. With an annual federal budget of \$63 million and more than 400,000 volunteers each year, RSVP is one of the largest volunteer programs in the nation. A total of 741 organizations receive federal grant funds to operate an RSVP project in their communities, which they augment by securing funding and resources from non-federal partners.

This information collection is a requirement of the Serve America Act. The information collection will be used by the community partners of current Senior Corps grantees for the national RSVP re-competition beginning in 2013. Completion of the Stakeholder Survey is required in order for RSVP grantees to receive pre-competition training and technical assistance.

A2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The Stakeholder Survey is to be completed by each RSVP Community Participation Group. The Community Participation Group is the structure that the federal program regulations require an RSVP sponsor to organize to ensure community participation in the project. The survey is designed to be completed by the group meeting as a whole and discussing then answering questions together, rather than each member completing a copy of the survey individually.

The results are for the use of the RSVP grantee, including the sponsor organization leadership and the RSVP project staff. The results can serve as a self-assessment for the RSVP grantee, identifying both strengths and challenges. The results will not factor into evaluation of applications received during re-competition of RSVP grants beginning in 2013.

A3. Minimize Burden: Use of Improved Technology to Reduce Burden

The Corporation will be eliciting and accepting grantees response to these questions electronically via email or via the Zoomerang electronic survey system.

A4. Non-Duplication

There are no other sources of information by which the Corporation can meet the purposes described in A2 (above).

A5. Minimizing for economic burden for small businesses or other small entities.

There is no economic burden to small businesses or other small entities beyond the cost of staff time to collect and report the data. This is minimized to the degree possible by only asking for the information absolutely necessary to serve as a self-assessment for the RSVP grantee.

A6. Consideration of Collection

The Serve America Act requires re-competition of RSVP grants beginning in 2013 and in preparation for the re-competition, the legislation requires a community stakeholder assessment.

A7. Special circumstances that would cause information collection to be collected in the specified ways.

There are no special circumstances that would require the collection of information in any other ways specified.

A8. Provide copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the Agency's notice.

The 60 day *Notice* soliciting comments was published on Tuesday, January 12, 2010 on page 1608.

The 30 day *Notice* soliciting comments was published Tuesday, April 20, 2010 on page 20570.

Comment 1 – Two commenters suggested that there were duplicative questions.

Response – Multiple questions on the same topic are posed to identify all issue areas.

Comment 2 – Two commenters requested greater definition of the terms “meaningful way” in Question 7 and “compelling evidence” in Question 14?

Response – Questions are designed to be as applicable to the individual respondent as possible. Qualitative standards will be different for each respondent. We cannot enhance the definition of most terms used beyond what is stated in the tool as they will be interpreted from each respondent’s perspective and that is okay for this assessment.

Comment 3 – Question 3, does not fit some of the RSVP sponsor relationships and should be re-written and should be more inclusive of all situations with sponsors.

Response – All questions are open to interpretation by the respondent. The responses to the questions are intended to benefit RSVP grantees and that depends on the adaptation of the instrument by the grantee.

Comment 4 - The Community Stakeholders Survey is necessary for gathering information about our RSVP Program and the format which has been sent out is concise for the amount of information being requested. The format is easy to follow and the directions should make using this survey easy for a group. I especially like that this is a survey for the group to be answered together which will allow debates and inconsistencies in the program to come to light.

Response – We concur.

Comment 5 - I do not believe this survey will be a burden in cost or time for staff or those set to take the survey, and I believe the survey may even help staff better focus their time on the things which can help the program, the volunteers and the community. While this survey needs to be in a hard copy form for the group discussion, the ability to submit this survey electronically would be most beneficial.

Response – We concur.

Comment 6 - Survey Instructions should be more specific-- actually laying out the role of Project Staff in the process. Are they to be present during the process? Provide support and requested information to the Advisory Council? Is this more of a self-directed process?

Response – We have reviewed the instructions and believe they adequately state that the benefit of the survey depends on its use by the grantee and respondents may engage in the most effective process that meets their individual needs.

Comment 7 - Language should remain consistent. The header says Community Advisory Group yet you see repeatedly see Community Participation Group.

Response – One instance found and edited per comment.

Comment 8 - Under header of Partnerships may consider adding Please check the following—also, question 8 and 9 are more of a Project Sustainability area.

Response – We have reviewed the instrument per the comment and believe that the instructions for the Partnership section are adequate as they are and Questions 8 and 9 are applicable to the intent of the instrument.

Comment 9 - Under Outreach header a good question may be: Does the RSVP project participate in community events/activities which allows promotion of the project?

Response – After review of the instrument, we believe to procure the most useful responses the tool best lends itself to its current variety of query and response formats.

Comment 10 - May be interesting to see how the Advisory Council views the Organizational Capacity of the Project. Is staffing knowledgeable, adequate? Facility appropriate? Technology adequate?

Response - The purpose of the tool is to assess how the project is interacting with its community partners and impacting the community from the community partners' perspective.

Comment 11 - I'm not sure that a true community perception can be demonstrated unless our Community Partners (stations) participate in the Assessment as well. Based on the Corporations previous response to a similar comment, I'm assuming that each project Director can include partners if they feel it's necessary.

Response – We concur.

Comment 12 - The use of Community Participation Group instead of Advisory Council or Community Advisory Council seemed to confuse my Council members; especially when used in the same sentence with “Community Groups”, as in organizations for interests they represent.

Response – One instance found and edited per comment.

Comment 13 - “How often and why does the RSVP project typically communicate with community partners that are not volunteer stations”. I'm not sure this is a question that an Advisory Council could answer accurately or without speculation.

Response - Program regulations require that grantee advisory councils be knowledgeable in the areas covered by the instrument.

Comment 14 - It would be nice to have room for additional comments on question #9. One might feel the need to expound a bit if they say “Yes”.

Response – We concur.

A9. Payment to Respondents

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

A10. Confidentiality

Information provided by this collection will be held solely by RSVP grantees, including the sponsor organization leadership and individual RSVP projects' staff.

A11. Sensitive Questions

The information collection does not include questions of a sensitive nature.

A12. Hour burden of the collection

We expect approximately 750 respondents to answer this survey to prepare current Senior Corps grantees for the national RSVP re-competition beginning in 2013. The frequency of response will not be greater than annually. The burden should not exceed 2.5 hours of effort per respondent. There is no estimated annual hour burden outside of the customary and usual business practices.

A13. Cost burden to the respondent

Not applicable.

A14. Cost to Government

There is no additional cost to the Government.

A15. Reasons for program changes

Not applicable.

A16. Publication of results

Not applicable because the responses to this information collection will not be published.

A17. Explain the reason for seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.

Not applicable.

A18. Exceptions to the certification statement

There are no exceptions to the certification statement in the submitted ROCIS form.