Hello! Thank you for meeting with me today. My name is XX, and I'm with ICF, a research and evaluation organization working with AmeriCorps to understand how states utilize the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grant. Today, we will be asking about ways in which this funding has been used by [state commission name] to engage in [VGF-funded activity, e.g., capacity building services] to support organizations in your state to recruit, manage, and support volunteers. Your response will help AmeriCorps to improve its VGF grant program.

This discussion is voluntary. You can decline to answer any questions. You can stop participating at any time. The information you share will remain private during and after the project. Neither your name nor any personal information about you will be shared beyond the ICF research team. We will maintain discussion data in secure areas. I would like to record the discussion to document information accurately. Only the ICF research team will have access to the recording. If you choose not to be recorded, I will take notes instead. I will not include your name in the notes.

(Confirm permission to record the session and, if confirmed, begin the recording.)

Before we begin, I want to check with you again that it is okay to record today's discussion.

Commission Role and Model

1. Let's begin with some background information. Please tell me a little bit about your role with the [state name] Commission and your role as it relates to the Volunteer Generation Fund grant.

    a. Who are other key commission staff who help manage VGF grant activities, and what are their roles as it relates to the VGF grant?

2. Can you please share the overarching approach that your state commission is implementing to develop or support community-based entities to recruit, manage, and support volunteers and increase the number of volunteers in your state?

(Note: Interviewer should have a good understanding of the commission's VGF program components and model, and should probe if any of these components are not mentioned.)

    a. What approach does your state use to *build capacity* of volunteer connector organizations (or other entities) to increase volunteer recruitment, retention, and support of volunteers?

    b. What approach does your state use to *create and improve volunteer networks* within the state?

    c. What other components of your state's model are aimed at improving volunteer recruitment (or increasing the number of volunteers in your state)?

d. What approaches does your state use to engage targeted populations in volunteer opportunities (e.g., corporate employees, students/youth, seniors/retirees, skilled volunteers in disaster management or other professions)?

3. Did the commission previously receive a VGF grant?

   a. If yes, when? What activities were implemented during previous grant cycles?

   b. If no, what components of the model were implemented prior to receiving the fiscal year (FY) 2020 VGF grant?

4. What are the main goals and objectives that the commission is trying to achieve during the current VGF grant term as it relates to capacity building and increasing the number of volunteers in your state? *(If not discussed previously.)*

   a. What changes, if any, have been made since your FY2020 application?

      i. What prompted these changes?

   b. How, if at all, have you made changes based on the COVID-19 pandemic?

   c. How, if at all, have you made changes to your approach to address diversity and inclusion?

   d. What changes, if any, have been made to the timeline of VGF-funded activities since your FY2020 application?

      i. What prompted these changes?

   e. What VGF activities, if any, have been accomplished to date since receiving the FY2020 grant?

   f. What are the key VGF-funded activities, if any, that will take place over FY2022?

5. What data do you collect to assess your performance measures outputs and outcomes as it relates to capacity building or number of volunteers in your state?

   a. How do you collect this data?

   b. What other data do you collect, if any?

6. Are you working with a third party evaluator or an internal evaluator to evaluate your program model?

   a. If yes, please describe your evaluation design/activities to date, as well as future plans for evaluation activities.

Program Implementers

(Note: These questions focus on the role of program implementers, which may include commission staff, program partners, grantees, consultants, or other entities.)

7. What is the commission's role, if any, in implementing components of the model? *(Interviewer should have some idea if the commission plays a role; if the commission is the implementer, skip questions about program partners.)*

8. Please tell me about your program partners that are responsible for implementing [VGF role/activity], if you have any.

9. How many program partners do you work with in implementing [VGF role/activity]? *(If not already stated.)*

10. How were these program partners selected?

    a. *(If RFP):* Can you tell me a little about the RFP process to select your partners/grantees?

    b. How long have you worked with your partners? *(e.g., Were partnerships established prior to the VGF grant?)*

11. What model do program implementers utilize to provide the training?

    a. Please describe the role of the program implementers (or partners) in developing the program activities and timeline.

       i. Please describe the role of the participants (beneficiaries/volunteer organizations).

    b. If program implementers utilize a train-the-trainer model, please describe who provides the training to the trainer.

       i. Please describe the role of the trainer and who participates in their training sessions.

12. Are program implementers developing the curriculum, training, or capacity building activities as part of the VGF grant, or are they implementing an already existing program?

    a. Please describe what aspects of the current program were developed prior to this grant. *(If not previously discussed.)*

13. What VGF-funded activities do your program implementers do to increase volunteer networks in your state, if any? *(If not already discussed.)*

14. How do program implementers work with other targeted populations (e.g., corporations, schools, community-based youth organizations, or skilled volunteers)? *(If not already discussed. Note: This may not be relevant to all grantees.)*

15. How, if at all, have program implementers' activities/trainings been impacted by COVID-19?

    a. What COVID-19-specific volunteer management training, if any, has been provided?

b. What challenges, if any, have program implementers encountered due to the pandemic?

16. How, if at all, have any program implementers' activities/volunteer management trainings included a focus on diversity and inclusion as it relates to volunteer management?

17. Are program implementers required to collect and assess VGF goals/objectives, outputs, and outcomes?

    a. If yes, what type of data do they collect?

    b. Are program implementers required to report on any performance measures? If so, which ones?

18. What data or reports do program implementers submit to the commission? How often do program implementers submit data or reports?

Program Beneficiaries

19. How, if at all, do commission staff interact with VGF-funded program recipients such as volunteer organizations, corporations, schools, or community-based organizations?

20. What feedback, if any, have you received from program recipients about their experiences working with the program implementers?

21. What types of data do program beneficiaries collect to help either program implementers or the state commission assess VGF goals/objectives, outputs, and outcomes, if any?

    a. How do they collect this data?

22. *[If the state commission implements other program components (e.g., platform/portal) related to volunteer recruitment or retention, in addition to capacity building/training, we can ask about the state commission's perceived awareness of how program beneficiaries utilize these other components.]*

23. We'd like to speak to one or two program implementers. Do you have any recommendations?

24. What additional feedback or insights, if any, would you like to share with us regarding the VGF program?