RPCV/W

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, D.C.

RPCV/W Community Grants Program

Overview

The Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington DC (RPCV/W) fosters an inclusive network for members to connect through social, professional, and service opportunities. We build upon the skills and experiences of RPCVs to serve our communities and promote a deeper understanding of our world and its cultures.

The purpose of the RPCV/W Community Grants Program is to provide financial support for projects and activities that promote Peace Corps ideals, with a focus on community service, cross-cultural understanding, and social and environmental initiatives within the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. The grant program aims to encourage RPCV/W members to continue their service and leadership within the local community.

Eligibility Guidelines

- Preference will be given to programs implemented in Washington, DC. Organizations must be based in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Local offices of national or regional organizations are eligible to apply if the proposed program will be implemented in Washington, DC. While preference is given to Washington, DC, programs that also serve the surrounding metro area will be considered. For the purposes of this grant program, the Washington, DC metropolitan area is defined as Washington, DC and the following surrounding areas:
    - Virginia: Alexandria, Falls Church, Arlington County, and Fairfax County
    - Maryland: Montgomery County, Prince George's County
- The following types of organizations are eligible to apply. Applicants must submit proof of their status in one of these categories. For example, a 501(c)(3) must submit proof of their status, or an organization that uses a fiscal sponsor must submit proof of an active agreement with a fiscal sponsor:
    - Registered nonprofit organizations, such as 501(c)(3) public charities;
    - Groups, projects, or community organizations that use a fiscal sponsor;
    - Small businesses or social enterprises engaged in charitable activities;
    - Schools, colleges, and universities;
- Connection to the RPCV Community
    - The grant program prioritizes projects and organizations that collaborate with a member of RPCV/W or a non-RPCV/W affiliated Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.

    - While connection to the RPCV community is important, it should be noted that members of the grant committee, RPCV/W Board, and their immediate families are not eligible to receive funding and may not benefit from these grant funds. These individuals should not be included as the sole or primary connection to the RPCV community. However, organizations that these individuals work for or with may apply if they have other connections to the RPCV community.
- Financial management
    - The organization must have financial management controls in place that enable it to responsibly manage grant funds, track project expenditures, and complete end-of-project financial reporting per the reporting template that RPCV/W will provide.
    - Grantees must keep detailed financial records of the expenditure of grant funds, using accepted organizational accounting and financial management practices and keeping invoices and receipts.
    - RPCV/W reserves the right to request interim financial reporting if there are reasonable concerns about the grantee's use of grant funds.

Application Form: Will open on November 17, 2026. The link will be posted on the RPCV/W website
Application Deadline: January 17, 2027 at 11:59pm Eastern Time
Notification of Funding Decisions: March 2027

Award Amount and Duration
Applicants may request any amount up to $1,000. The amount requested should be in line with planned activities. Applicants will propose a project timeline of up to 12 months as part of the application process, and must use project funds by the end of the agreed upon grant end date.

Priority Funding Areas
The four below categories are the priority funding areas for this RFP. While applicants may propose projects outside of these areas, applications in the four below categories will be prioritized.

Priorities:
- Environmental and Climate Action
- Refugee and Migrant Support
- Education or training for underserved or marginalized populations (whether youth or adult)
- Community development

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion are cross-cutting programmatic priorities. When designing their application, applicant organizations are encouraged to consider how these values are incorporated and how their proposed programs ensure that their programming is fair, safe, equitable, and accessible to the target population.

Application and Evaluation/Selection Process

- **Application:** A straightforward application is available on the RPCV/W website. The application allows applicants to submit a project description, a detailed budget, and provide details on how the project aligns with RPCV/W's mission and funding priorities.
- **Evaluation:** A grant committee, composed of RPCV/W members and board members, will review applications based on the following criteria:
    - **Alignment:** How well the project aligns with the above priority funding areas and RPCV/W's mission.
    - **Collaboration with an RPCV**
    - **Community integration:** How well the organization understands the target community, and how the organization is established or plans to become established and develop the necessary relationships for a successful project.
    - **Project design and management:** Project design and implementation plan.
    - **Organizational capacity to complete the proposed work:** The organization's expertise or capacity to implement the specific activities that will lead to the expected results and impact.
    - **Proposed budget:** How well the budget supports the proposed activities. All costs in the budget should be eligible expenses as described below. Note: RPCV/W has created an optional budget template for applicants to use. Applicants will be required to upload a budget and may use this or their own organizational budget template to create their budget. The template that the applicant chooses to use will not affect scoring. Budgets will be scored on eligibility of planned expenses and how they support proposed activities.
    - **Impact:** The project's potential impact on the target community, population, or environment.
    - **Scalability:** The potential for the project to serve as a model for others.
- **Selection:** Once the committee has reviewed and scored all applications, the RPCV/W board will vote to approve final funding decisions for the most competitive applications.

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Eligible Expenses

Direct Costs

- Expenses needed for direct project implementation. Examples could include supplies, items for distribution to program participants, or training expenses.
- Local transportation expenses for direct project implementation. Examples could include fuel for local transport, or public transportation costs.
- Reasonable compensation or honoraria for staff or individuals directly involved in project implementation. If any salary, compensation, or honoraria are included, it should be included as a line item in the budget and should be well justified. There is a cap of $250 for staff salary, compensation, or honoraria.
- Office supplies and communication expenses needed for project implementation.
- Stipends for program participants

Ineligible expenses

- Grant funds may not be used for travel expenses outside of the DC metro area, unless accompanied by a strong justification detailing clear need for project implementation, in which case prior approval would be required.
- Grant funds may not be used for any purposes forbidden under US federal, state, or local law.
- Grant funds may not be used for partisan political activities, such as campaigning for candidates in an election.
- Grant funds may not be used for indirect organizational costs. Indirect organizational costs are overhead and administrative costs that are not direct costs of implementing the proposed project. Examples of indirect organizational costs include but are not limited to office rent, utility bills, and salaries for administrative staff not involved in project implementation.

Grant Administration

Grantees selected will be contacted by RPCV/W to complete a grant agreement and to initiate transfer of grant funds. Organizations must have an organizational or business bank account to receive grant funds - grant funds will not be disbursed to individuals. Grant recipients are expected to expend grant funds per proposed activities and projects. RPCV/W will notify the grantee of the main point of contact at RPCV/W for grant administration correspondence. The RPCV/W Grants Committee recognizes that grant applicants are working in communities with dynamic and sometimes rapidly changing needs. If a recipient needs to change project plans to address changing needs in the community, the recipient should contact RPCV/W as soon as possible to explain the situation and request approval to modify project plans.

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As stated above, grants are expected to be for projects up to 12 months maximum duration. If a recipient needs more time to implement project activities, a one-time no cost extension of up to three months maximum may be requested, which RPCV/W reserves the right to approve or deny. There is no penalty or reward for completing all planned project activities and/or attaining project goal(s) earlier than the requested grant period.

At the end of the grant period, any unexpended grant funds in excess of $100 must be returned to RPCV/W.

Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit a final report no later than 60 days after the grant end date using a template provided by RPCV/W. The report will include the following sections:

- Programmatic Report: To describe the impact of the project and share any photos or attachments (if applicable).
- Financial Report: To document the use of grant funds.

Recipient reports will be used for our Annual Report and other marketing purposes. Please flag if there's anything to be kept private. Additionally, recipients may be invited to a RPCV/W board or grants committee meeting to present the results of their projects.

Questions

Please contact membership@rpcvw.org with any questions.