2021 Summer Strong DC Grant Competition

Questions and Answers
Updated 12.4.20

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Scope

Q1. What is SEL? What is Academic Recovery?

A. For the purposes of the Request for Applications (RFA), the terms are defined as follows:

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL), is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL).
- Academic recovery provides personalized and collaborative academic support to youth and refers to the requirement that all applicants have an academic component to their program that will measure the progress youth make this summer in the academic area(s) identified.

Q2. Must the organization's primary mission be to serve youth, or can youth programming be a component of the overall mission?

A. Youth development can be a component of the overall mission.

Q3. Is the program only for DC Public Schools (DCPS) youth or also for independent and charter youth?

A. Grant funds are targeting at-risk youth across the District and is not dependent on the school in which they are enrolled.

Q4. Does the program need to be open to all DC youth? (i.e. if the applicant is a school, can the program be open only to student's enrolled at the school?)

A. Yes. The program must be open to all at-risk DC youth. In the case of a charter school, the program must be open to all youth within that charter school building.

Q5. What about the connection between the OST School Year grant and Summer Strong. If an organization has a School Year OST grant and then receives Summer Strong funds, are they eligible to have both resources combined for up to 3 years total?

A. If an organization receives a School Year 2020-2021 Out of School Time Grants grant and is awarded a Summer 2021 grant, the organization may be invited to an invitation only Year-Round grant competition. All grant competitions are based on availability of funding. Historically, all continuation grants have been awarded for three years.

Q6. Do all of the five hours per day need to be supervised learning time?

A. All hours must be supervised.

Q7. Can the five hours per day be a combination of virtual and in-person learning time? If yes, is there a limit to how many hours can be virtual within the five-hour day? Can the five days per week be a combination of virtual and in-person learning time? If yes, is there a limit to how many days can be virtual within the five days per week?

A. Yes, however the five hours per day should be continuous with small breaks. Programs may consider three days in-person and two days virtual. All program models must meet the five hours per day, five days a week, for five weeks.

Q8. If there is virtual learning, can it be a combination of asynchronous and synchronous time? If yes, is there a limit to how many hours or days within the week that can be asynchronous?
A. The camp needs to run for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week, for five weeks of synchronous programming, regardless of whether it is in-person, hybrid, or virtual programming.

Q9. What if programs are still virtual when Summer arrives? Will virtual programming be accepted?
A. The application should describe programing that may include in-person, hybrid, and virtual options. Decisions on virtual programming will occur in conjunction with Mayoral mandates and DC Health recommendations and cannot be made at this time.

Q10. The Request for Applications (RFA) indicates that the program must meet for 5 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 5 weeks. If the program needs to pivot to virtual learning next summer, does the 5 hours/day requirement remain?
A. Yes.

Organization Requirement & Eligibility

Q1. Is it required that an organization be a nonprofit?
A. Yes. Only 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply.

Q2. How old do you have to be to apply for this grant opportunity?
A. All applicants must be nonprofit organizations with IRS 501(c)3 status for a minimum of two years. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Q3. Do organizations have to submit a logic model with the grant application?
A. Yes. Organizations may submit the logic model in any format.

Q4. Does an organization need a Certificate of Incorporation dated before 12/7/2018?
A. Yes. The Certificate of Incorporation must be dated 12/7/2018 or earlier.

Q5. Does an organization need a Foreign Registration dated before December 7, 2018?
A. Yes. In order to apply for the Summer Strong Grant, the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) Certificate of Incorporation or DC Registration as a Foreign Entity must be dated December 7, 2018 or earlier. For organizations that qualify for the Summer Strong Small Nonprofit grant, the date is December 7, 2019 or earlier.

Q6. **In Section B.1 it lists all required attachments. A syllabus is not listed, however there is a sample one included on page 20 and it is referenced in B.2.4. Should a syllabus be included?**

    A. Yes. A syllabus is a required document.

Q7. **A required attachment is "DCRA Basic Business License (BBL), valid through, or renewed to be valid through, August 27, 2021 or later." If an organization has the Basic Business License and it is valid through mid-2021, and another business license for the summer program campus that is valid through the date of summer programming, can the organization submit the current BBLs and remain qualified to apply?**

    A. Yes. The Basic Business License must be valid at the time of submission. The organization shall apply for a BBL renewal prior to expiration and may submit the new BBL at that time to the OST Office.

Q8. **Our organization was granted 501(c)(3) status on December 20, 2018, so at the time of the submission for this grant we will be just about two weeks before the two-year anniversary as a formal 501(c)(3). The formal "effective date of exemption" from the IRS is May 15, 2018, with the paperwork having come on December 20, 2018. Will this be acceptable?**

    A. Yes. The effective date is the relevant date.

Q9. **I would like to confirm eligibility of a potential program for this grant under RFA section A.3.4. Last summer, we hosted a large number of Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) students under the Career Ready Internships with a substantial educational and guest speaker program. Could an organization use a Summer Strong grant to support the programming behind internships or would it be ineligible because those students are paid under SYEP? Our organization did not receive any grant funding from Department of Employment Services (DOES) to offer these internship positions.**

    A. The program is eligible to apply if all other requirements are met and:
- Participants are not being paid to work, intern, or as staff for the program, but will participate in the programming; and
- Participants are being paid directly by DOES or directly by the program; and
- The program is not receiving any programming funds from DOES.

Q10. **For the question, "Describe the retention goal for the program and the percentage of youth that will be retained", does this refer to retention from previous years, (e.g. what percent of students from summer 2020 returned for summer 2021 OR the percent of students who enroll and stay in the program for the grant period). Or is it 30 youth enroll and 30 complete the program for 100% retention?**

    A. It refers to the percent of students who enroll and stay in the program for the program period.

Q11. **Can an organization still be eligible to apply if they do not have two (2) years worth of 990's?**

    A. If the organization meets eligibility for the 501 (c)3 status and all other required documents, it is possible to not have two (2) years of 990s and remain eligible to apply.

Q12. If an organization is applying for a Summer Strong grant and wants to partner with a different organization that is also applying as a lead for a separate Summer Strong grant, does it affect either organization's eligibility to receive an independent grant?
> A. Organizations may only apply once. Each application is reviewed independently. There is no impact on final award determination if an organization that has applied is also named in another entity's application.

Q13. Can an organization still be eligible to apply if they do not have one year of the most recent audit, financial review or CPA engagement letter?
> A. If the organization meets eligibility for the 501(c)3 status and all other required documents, it is possible to not have one year of the most recent audit, financial review, or CPA engagement letter and remain eligible to apply.

Program Locations

Q1. Should organizations write as though they have access to schools?
> A. Organizations should write applications as if they will be able to provide programming in-person, but with the ability to offer virtual programming if schools are not accepting partners. Organizations should have a preexisting relationship at the school identified on the cover sheet.

Q2. Are grant applicants required to obtain a signature from a Principal for this grant? DCPS will not sign off on any on-site program request due to Covid-19.
> A. No. Organizations must list the proposed program locations on the cover sheet and identify if the location is a DCPS facility. Final determination of DCPS locations will be made in 2021.

Q3. Can programs operate at multiple sites?
> A. Yes.

Q4. Can part of the program begin in DC and, assuming travel is safe, also take place abroad, as a component of the program?
> A. Yes, but the youth served must reside in DC. The physical program location does not need to be in the District. The grant funds may only be used for District youth and other funding must cover program expenses for youth served from other jurisdictions.

Q5. Where in the proposal should we address virtual, hybrid, or in-person plans?
> A. Section B.2.4, "Description of Youth Program(s)" - Program Design requests that information.

Q6. In 2020, tentative DCPS location preference by Wards and 'No Preference' were listed in the application cover page. Will these categories be requested for Summer 2021?

A. No. The 2020 Summer Strong DC Enrichment at DCPS/DPR requested that information, but that specific competition is not being offered.

Q7. **Assuming there will be any in-person instruction, the program intends to use DC school facilities and to recruit students. What is the best way to request to use those facilities? If the facilities are not otherwise open, will Learn24 cover the cost of opening those buildings? How can an organization budget for that?**

A. Organizations must list the proposed program locations on the cover sheet and identify if the location is a DCPS facility. Final determination of DCPS locations will be made in 2021. Organizations should have a preexisting relationship at the school identified on the cover sheet. Learn24 will not cover the costs associated with opening buildings.

Needs & Justification

Q1. **Of the 30 unduplicated youth served, can 30 youth participate for 3 weeks and 15 be selected to do 2 weeks of model congress?**

A. No. All youth must be able to participate in all five consecutive weeks of programming. The program must ensure a minimum of 30 unduplicated youth are served throughout the program period. The program should plan accordingly to have 30 youth attend regularly.

Q2. **Provide details about community need? Give an example?**

A. Organizations should know what programs are available to youth in the community they serve and what programs are in demand in the community. Additional information on serving "at-risk" youth may be found through the D.C. Policy Center's *Needs Assessment of Out-of-School Time Programs* and Policy Studies Associates' *Voices of DC Parents and Youth on OST.*

Programmatic Experience

Q1. **Does a program need to be operating for 2 years? What if the program was provided during the school year and had academic and SEL components?**

A. All Summer Strong programs need an academic component. If the program was not previously offered as a summer program but has been offered at other times during the year, the organization is eligible to apply. Organization must have offered the program for at least two years.

Q2. **Do organizations have to have offered an academic component in the past to qualify?**

A. Academic recovery is necessary due to the COVID impacts. Applicants must demonstrate the history and ability to provide high-quality academic programming.

Q3. **If an organization delivered SEL programs in the past, but not academic recovery, and adds academic recovery are they eligible to apply?**

A. Programs must have a history of providing academic component and utilize a formative assessment to measure the academic recovery.

Q4. **If an organization facilitates internships for 20 hours each week and then participants have 5 hours with staff for professional development trainings, does that meet the dosage requirement?**
  A. Participants need to have access to programs for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week, for five consecutive weeks.

Q5. **My organization is planning to focus our proposal around the core components that will be present in summer programming with notes and examples about how that core structure would be applied if programming were virtual vs. in person. Is this approach sufficient?**
  A. Programming descriptions should be clear so that reviewers can understand the different approaches considered depending on what type of programs could be provided this summer.

Q6. **Regarding the requirement that an "organization must have offered the program for at least two (2) years." In the new virtual environment, if a program modified a curriculum to allow it to be delivered in varied timeframes, does the modified curriculum need to have been offered for at least two (2) years in order to be eligible to apply?**
  A. No. A standard curriculum modified to meet the current virtual environment is acceptable.

Q7. **If a program combines social emotional development and civic education and aligns with the social studies curriculum, does this meet the requirement for academic programming?**
  A: Organizations may choose any academic content area, but must also describe the formative assessment used to measure the participants skills and knowledge gained over the program period.

Operation & Finance

Q1. **What exactly does 30% of operating expenses mean? Is it the same as administrative costs?**
  A. As a best practice in nonprofit management, organizational budgets should have 70% or more of the organization budget used for direct program expense.

Q2. **If an organization is proposing to serve 30 unduplicated youth, is the budget maximum $55k (half of the $110k to serve 60 unduplicated youth)? Or can it be higher considering that scaling to meet higher numbers can reduce the per-student cost?**
  A. The applicant must be able to describe or provide the rationale for the grant amount requested and number of youth served.

Q3. **The RFA indicates that 60 youth must be served to request the maximum $110,00, and at least 30 youth must be served to be funded - is there a maximum per youth cost as well, if requesting less than the full $110,000?**
  A. The applicant must be able to describe or provide the rationale for the grant amount requested and number of youth served.

Q4. **The RFA requests "Two (2) years of the most recently completed Income Statement and Balance Sheet". Does that mean 2018 and 2019 or does that mean 2019 and YTD 2020 or does that mean the last 24 months?**

A. The last two completed years of Income Statements and Balance Sheets are required. The years are based on the organization's fiscal years.

Grant Fund Limitations

Q1. Can grants be used in conjunction with 21st Century Funds?
    A. Yes, but grant funds cannot be used for the same youth and the same program.

Q2. Are community school funds through OSSE considered city funds, and if so, is an organization ineligible to apply for these funds?
    A. The OSSE community school funds are considered local District of Columbia funds. The OST Office grants cannot be used in conjunction with other City funds for the same youth and the same program.

Q3. If an organization as a whole receives city funds for other departments/programs, would it be ineligible to apply for this grant?
    A. No. OST Office grant funds cannot be used for the same youth and the same program.

Reviewers

Q1. How can individual's sign-up to be grant reviewers?
    A. Contact Learn24@dc.gov or complete the interest form here by December 1, 2020.

Q2. Are applicants eligible to be grant reviewers?
    A. Yes. Applicants can serve as grant reviewers but will not be allowed to review applications in the same competition for which the organization has applied.

Q3. What is the anticipated time commitment for grant reviewers?
    A. Depending on the number of grants distributed and the individual's preferences, the OST Office anticipates that reviews will not exceed ten hours. Reviewers will have one month to complete the reviews.

Q4. Is there any financial compensation to serve as a grant reviewer?
    A. No. This opportunity is a strictly voluntary.

Other Questions

Q1. The anticipated amount of Summer Strong DC funding is up to $1.15 million. How much was awarded last summer?
    A. $2,024,501 was awarded for the 2020 Summer Strong DC grant competition.

Q2. Are these grants part of the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) program?
    A. No. The Learn24 grants are separate from MBSYEP.

Q3. Are summer reading lists considered a best practice for meeting or exceeding DCPS reading standards among youth?
    A. We are unable to respond on DCPS reading standards.

Q4. What are some available sites to get access to scholarly articles on evidence-based practices?

    A. The OST Office cannot provide specific sites or promote any organization.

Q5. Are applicants required to provide meals?

    A. No. However the OST Office can connect organizations with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for sponsorships and connections with other organizations in order to provide meals. Since youth will be at the program for five hours daily, providing access to summer meals is often a best practice.

Q6. Can you give us some examples of how local youth education-focused nonprofits respond to the narrative's question on "methods used to dismantle structural racism"? Or can you share examples of how successful applicants have addressed the questions on systemic racism in the past?

    A. Eliminating racism is a value of the OST Commission and OST Office. Every applicant must consider their role in dismantling structural racism and how they will eliminate racism either within their organization or by systemic change.

Q7. What are the key differences between the current summer competitions available?

    A. Some of the key differences are:

- Summer Strong DC is open to all nonprofit organizations which can apply for up to $110,000 to serve a minimum of 60 youth;
- Summer Strong DC Small Nonprofit is open to nonprofit organizations with operating budgets of $250,000 or less which can apply for up to $25,000 to serve a minimum of 15 youth; and
- Summer Strong Coordinating Entity is open to all nonprofit organizations which can apply for up to $100,000 to serve a minimum of 30 youth to provide full day summer camp for youth living in DC Housing Authority locations or at Department of Human Services (DHS) short-term family housing sites with the assistance of local vendors. Local vendors will receive a minimum of 40% of the total grant funds.

Q8. Is the recording and the PowerPoint of the Grant Information Session available?

    A. Yes. They can be found on the Learn24 website, under Service Providers, Funding Opportunities, [here](#).

Q9. Is Seamless Docs reachable through the RFA?

    A. Yes. It is linked in the RFAs and on the Learn24 website and is the platform that will be used to collect the applications and supporting documents for the summer grants, found [here](#).

Q10. In Seamless Docs, in the questions where longer responses are required (such as the mission and schedule), the text gets entered as a single line. When it is printed out, only one line is visible. Is that a problem?

A. The information obtained in Seamless Docs is for internal OST Office use only. The applicant will only see one line of text, but the OST Office can access the information in paragraph form.

Q11. When applying in partnership with a fiscal sponsor, the narrative asks to "describe the organization's capacity and experience (quantitative and qualitative evidence) with managing and complying with programmatic and financial grant reporting requirements." Is that information needed from the fiscal sponsor and the organization?

A. The answer depends on the relationship between the fiscal sponsor and the organization. The narrative should include details on which party is responsible for managing the grant (including both programmatic and financial details) and the organization that person is associated with so the various grant responsibilities are clear.