



**Senior Community Center (SCC) Grants
Frequently Asked Questions and Responses
Updated November 23, 2016**

I. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS INTRODUCTION

1. What is the grant award period?

The grant award period begins when the Grant Agreement is fully executed by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) and will continue for approximately a twelve-month period. All grants will have the same end date.

2. Please expand on what you mean by programming enhancements.

Funding will be awarded based on the project's ability to increase participation and programming; attract a new generation of older adults; and, enable the SCC to provide a safe and healthy environment for participants. Examples include improving the appearance of a facility so that it is more pleasing to more participants, acquiring new and updated equipment that will allow the introduction of new services, initiating a new program to fill a need, and acquiring or updating technology within the center.

3. Explain what “applications from all regions will be considered based on merit and the minimum requirement of one award per region” means.

The goal at PDA is to fund projects statewide. Grant funding will be awarded based on the results of the scoring evaluation and recommendations for funding for each project and will not be dependent on the number of projects submitted within a region. Depending upon the response, the number and funding amounts for each region will vary.

4. How many applications may a senior community center (SCC) submit?

Each SCC may submit one (1) application.

II. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Who is the ideal applicant? The SCC, the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) or the county?

SCCs are the ideal applicants for this grant opportunity.

2. Who may apply for this grant?

SCCs having an existing contractual relationship with the AAA to monitor the center for compliance with the PDA Aging Program Directive #96-04-01, "Senior Community Center and Satellite Center Policies and Standards," may apply for the SCC Grant Program funds. The SCC shall be in operation and provide a broad spectrum of services which shall include social, nutritional, health and wellness, recreational and educational services.

3. Is it possible to apply for a waiver to the eligibility requirements?

Exceptions to the eligibility requirements for underserved populations may be granted at the discretion of the Secretary. See link to the 2016-2017 SCC Grant Waiver Request Form at aging.pa.gov

4. (NEW) When will organizations that submitted a waiver request form receive notification that they are permitted to apply for the grant?

Waiver requests will be evaluated as they are received, and a determination made as quickly as possible. Organizations that have submitted a waiver should still be prepared to submit a completed application and all required documents by the deadline of December 12, 2016.

5. Is there an age requirement for the consumers affected, i.e. 50+, 55+, or 60+ for congregate/senior center participation?

The purpose of the SCC grant is to increase participation and attract a younger population of seniors while continuing to serve the core participants of 60 years of age and older. Inclusive projects that incorporate intergenerational groups and/or appeal to consumers 50 to 60 years of age are appropriate for funding.

6. Is the SCC required to certify that they meet the minimum standards outlined in PDA Program Directive #96-04-01 SCC and Satellite Center Policies and Standards?

A certification by the SCC's executive director and board chair (if applicable) that the information in the application is true and correct is required on the application cover sheet (Line 52).

7. Can a non-profit organization that raises funds for the SCC apply for the funds for several SCCs with a letter of support from the AAA?

Only SCCs may apply for this grant opportunity.

8. Can an SCC that was previously awarded funding submit an application for a different project at the same center or a different center?

The 2016-2017 SCC grant is a new grant opportunity and previously awarded centers may apply.

9. May an organization apply for separate grant opportunities located in two different counties? If so, may they request up to \$150,000 for each county/grant or is the total allowable amount for all grants \$150,000?

Yes. Organizations may apply for multiple grants as long as each applicant qualifies as a SCC. Each grant applicant may request up to \$150,000 for separate projects and, if two centers are collaborating on a project, the total fund request amount is \$150,000.

III. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Is the letter of support from the AAA required?

The letter of support is required to be associated with each application.

2. What steps should we take to obtain a letter of support?

Notify the AAA in your area that your center is preparing an application for this grant opportunity and request that they show their support of your proposal by completing the Letter of Support Form. This form can be found with other application materials at www.aging.pa.gov. The letter of support is to be issued from the AAA director or board of directors. The letter of support shall be emailed by the AAA directly to PDA. If the letter is not received, the applicant will be notified.

3. Is there a limit on how many letters of support the AAA can provide?

There is no limit on the number of letters of support that the AAA can provide to SCC applicants located within their planning and service area.

4. If a letter of support was obtained for a previous grant period, can the same letter be used for the subsequent grant year?

New letters of support are necessary.

5. Do you recommend additional support letters beyond the AAAs such as political officials, municipalities, etc.?

Additional letters of support are not required but add strength to your application by indicating community support and enhanced ability to sustain the project.

6. Will grants be considered that do not include a letter of support from the AAA?

Grants submitted without a letter of support will not be considered.

7. May an applicant submit additional information such as blueprints, pictures or other supporting documentation along with their application?

Additional information is acceptable. These would be submitted as attachments (appendices) to your application. They may be saved on your flash drive or sent in a separate email to SCCgrants@pa.gov.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The application calls for a “most recent audit.” Why is this required and what is an acceptable form?

The intent of this requirement is for the SCC to indicate financial stability. Acceptable audit documents include a recent AAA financial monitoring report, a compiled financial statement specific to the SCC or an IRS Form 990.

2. For the SCCs who serve participants over and under age 60, will reporting be required for all ages or only for participants 60 years of age and older?

The data submission will depend upon the grant project. A project that includes goals or objectives pertaining to additional age groups or demographics will require data submissions regarding the additional participants.

3. Will an application that has collaborations between two SCC providers be accepted? For example, could a non-profit work with a SCC to apply for this grant?

Collaborative applications are acceptable. One SCC will need to be designated as the lead on the application for grant budgeting, payment and reporting purposes (see Page 4 of the Application Submission Instructions for more information).

4. If grant funds are to be used for two separate projects within a center, should two separate budgets and narratives be submitted?

If multiple projects are submitted within the same application, then they will be scored as one project.

5. For capital projects, should copies of permits and letters of commitment from our contractors be submitted?

Copies of permits and letters of commitment from contractors should not be submitted to PDA but should be kept on file locally.

6. Does the contracting process specified for renovation work apply to non-construction consultants as well?

The contracting process specified for renovation contractors is not applicable for consultants.

7. Please clarify the procurement process for equipment and renovation work; i.e. number of bids required. Can bids/estimates be secured once the grant is awarded? Should these be included as attachments to the proposal? For a capital project, does the Davis-Bacon Act apply?

County-affiliated SCCs shall follow local county procurement rules. Non-affiliated county SCCs shall solicit multiple estimates or bids. Bids/estimates may be secured once the grant is awarded, but it is strongly encouraged that the center begins to secure bids and estimates now in order to inform the project budget process. Copies of the estimates or bids should be kept on file. The Davis-Bacon Act does not apply. County-affiliated providers may use Costars in lieu of obtaining bids.

8. What is the dollar limit over which an item has to be put out to bid, as opposed to just choosing an appropriate vendor?

Non-county affiliated SCCs shall solicit two or more estimates or bids for any single expense exceeding \$1,000.

9. Would an addition to an existing SCC, with no additional land acquisition, be considered acceptable for the grant application? Does purchase of a parking lot constitute as an acceptable grant proposal?

New construction refers to site preparation and building of an entirely new structure and/or significant extensions to existing structures and any substantial addition to land. An addition is considered new construction and is not an acceptable project for the grant. Purchase of a parking lot is considered an addition to land and is not an acceptable project for the grant.

10. What is the difference between new construction and renovations?

New construction refers to site preparation and building of an entirely new structure and/or significant extensions to existing structures and any substantial addition to land. Renovations refer to restoring to good condition, making new or as if new again, and making repairs or remodeling without increasing the existing footprint of the structure.

11. Is prevailing wage a requirement in capital improvements/construction renovation?

The grant application does not address prevailing wage requirements. However, violation of any federal or state law regulating hours of labor, minimum wage

standards, prevailing wage standards, anti-discrimination, or child labor laws will result in denial or termination of a grant agreement.

12. (NEW) What is the Department's position on funding part of the salary for the person who will be involved in the expansion of services? Does requesting support for wages impact the grant score?

It is ok to request wages as long as you can justify the time and how it relates directly to the implementation of the project. Requesting wages will not impact your grant score and you will not lose points; however, if the request for wages is deemed ineligible for grant funding, the final award amount will be reduced by that amount.

13. What are the restrictions on how the funding can be used? Can funding be used to establish more satellite sites?

Funds may be used to update, renovate or refurbish a facility. Examples include improving the appearance of a facility so that it is more pleasing to more participants; acquiring new and updated equipment that will allow the introduction of new services; initiating a new program to fill a need; and acquiring or updating technology within the center. Funds may not be used for new construction or to create a new SCC or satellite site where the structure does not exist.

14. Can you provide an overview of the process that is used for reviewing the submitted application?

Nine scoring criteria identified in the SCC Grant Application Submission Instructions (Section III) are used in the review. How the application addresses the nine criteria will be scored by a review team consisting of PDA & Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (P4A) staff.

15. Who will be judging the grant applications?

A team of reviewers from PDA & P4A will be scoring the applications. The final selection will be determined by the Secretary of Aging, Teresa E. Osborne.

16. How will capital investment projects be scored?

Capital investment projects will be scored by the criteria identified in the grant application. A capital investment should be tied to goals and objectives relating to how the project addresses the seven identified areas.

V. GRANT AWARD INFORMATION

1. Is there a minimum grant amount to request?

The minimum grant amount is \$5,000.

2. How many grants will be approved?

PDA will award grants until the \$2 million is expended.

3. Some SCCs have depleted reserves due to budget cuts. Is there any possibility for a different funding modality such as holding funds in escrow?

PDA will provide 50 percent (%) of the total award upfront. The grantee shall begin to draw down the remainder of the funding when the submitted invoices exceed the amount of the start-up funds given.

4. Will grant requests be funded at the full amount requested or is there a possibility of being partially funded based on reviewer discretion?

PDA will fully or partially fund grants based on the quality of the submission and findings of the evaluation team. Applicants may indicate whether or not they are willing to accept partial funding for their proposed project.

5. Will grants be awarded to cover partial costs of a project if the total cost of the project exceeds \$150,000?

PDA will consider grant applications that cover partial costs of the project. It will be an important part of your application to explain how all funding sources will be combined to ensure that the final project will be completed.

6. If awarded a grant, when can I start spending grant funds on my project?

Applicants will be notified by letter from PDA of a grant award. PDA will issue a Grant Agreement to the grantee. Grantee will sign the Grant Agreement and return for PDA signatures and execution of the agreement. Grantee may spend grant funds on the project, **when they receive the final agreement signature page that has been signed by all parties.** The grant begins on the date the agreement has been executed with all signatures.

7. If a project is already in the works, can grant funds be used to help cover/complete the project or are the grant dollars only for expenses incurred after the date of the signed contract?

Grant funds are not to replace funds that have already been raised or to pay off loans or lines of credit. Grant applications where the proposed project is already underway may be considered. **Grant funds may be spent only after the date of the executed contract.**

8. **(NEW) There is a fee involved in obtaining a construction quote and while we do not know the exact cost, it could be significant. We would prefer to include this cost in our application so that it can be covered by grant funds. Are we able to anticipate the cost and if the anticipated cost is too high are we able to use the money elsewhere i.e., in another area of the grant?**

Yes, you may anticipate the cost of the project. If you want to use grant funds to cover the cost of the quote, then do not schedule that until after you have received an executed grant agreement. If your estimate is too high, funds may be diverted to another budget category as long as you include an area in your project that can be flexible such as exercise equipment, computers, etc. For example: If you request money to buy one (1) computer and have additional money left over you may buy multiple computers.

VI. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

A. SCC Grant Application Workbook

1. **What is meant by the “PDA 2016-2020 State Plan on Aging Goal” section of the application? What is needed for this?**

The PDA 2016-2020 State Plan on Aging references the following four (4) goals. Applicants will need to identify the goal(s) that grant proposal addresses on Lines 47-50 of the SCC Grant Application Workbook tab 1- Information Cover Page:

Goal 1: Promote existing services

Goal 2: Improve access to services

Goal 3: Enhance quality of services

Goal 4: Empower the workforce

Further details regarding PDA’s 2016-2020 State Plan on Aging may be found at www.aging.pa.gov

2. **(NEW) Is it appropriate to connect the project to the broad goals stated in the 2016-2020 State Plan or should specific objectives be referenced?**

It is appropriate to connect your project with broad goals outlined in the State Plan.

3. Explain what is requested regarding a certification by the board chairperson that the information is true and correct? Is a letter required? Does the certification need to be notarized?

The certification is a statement of affirmation on the cover sheet (SCC Grant Application Workbook Line 57). The certification does not need to be notarized. Type in the appropriate name(s) (Line 58). An electronic signature image is optional (Line 59).

4. For SCCs that are operated by the county AAA and do not have a “board of directors,” how should the signature be handled on the application?

The application requires a signature of the executive director of the SCC and a signature of the board chair, if applicable. An electronic signature is acceptable. If the SCC does not have a board of directors, then that signature would not be required

5. What budget category should be used for identifying capital improvement costs for renovations?

The following budget categories are most likely to be used for capital improvements: consultant services, personnel, equipment/supplies and other. It is important to divide a capital improvement cost over multiple budget categories, as applicable, instead of listing the entire amount in one category.

6. Does it make a difference if “full-time” is considered as 30 hours versus 40 hours, or is it simply the definition of the employer?

Employment status is determined by the employer.

7. How should the budget pages be completed when grant funds will not be used for personnel services, consultant services, or occupancy?

Leave the fields blank or enter zero into the budget categories that are not being used.

8. May an administrative agency include indirect costs (overhead for fiscal, IT, Human Resources, Administration) in the budget?

The budget for the project must be SCC specific. The administrative agency may not include indirect costs for the SCC in the budget.

9. What personnel expenses can be covered by a grant? Can you give specific examples?

Personnel expenses covered by the grant include staff specifically employed by the organization to perform activities related to the grant such as a program manager for the project, registered nurse, social worker, yoga instructor, etc. The hours funded by the grant would be the hours assigned to

the project. Administrative costs, such as salaries for existing staff should be excluded.

10. Where on the Grant Application Workbook do we list expenses related to contractor/remodelers?

Expenses related to contractor/remodelers, including labor costs, are identified within the “Other Costs” budget category. Identify the expenses associated with the remodeling project including the labor costs in the far left column. For example, expenses to renovate a kitchen area to include painting, countertops, floors, and labor would be listed in the far left column.

11. How do I sign the application if I do not have an electronic signature?

Type the name of the Senior Community Center’s executive director or board chair in Line 58 in the Information Cover Page and indicate that the information on the application is true and correct on Line 57.

B. Project Narrative

1. Is there a preferred font and can proposals be single-spaced?

The project narrative should be typed using a standard font and may be either single- or double-spaced. Complete your responses in the boxes provided on the form.

2. If a SCC has used the grant for a similar project, may data be used from a previous project to validate the proposed project?

Data may be submitted to strengthen the project narrative.

3. Should all data/research be footnoted?

Although it is not required, data/research may be footnoted or source-referenced in the text.

4. If a SCC was a previous awardee and are currently working toward a participation goal for that grant period, how should the participation increase for the following application period be projected? Also, if a SCC is awarded a grant in both fiscal years, how would the increased participation be measured if they cannot discern which project attributed to the increase?

The awardee should use the projected percent increase as the baseline participation rate for the subsequent grant project. A percent increase above the baseline rate would be identified as a goal in the subsequent grant

application. The individual evaluation component of the subsequent project would address the means to measure the participation rates.

- 5. (NEW) Our center was awarded a grant for the 2015-2016 SCC grant opportunity, for “Phase 1” of our renovation project to replace our flooring and construct a retractable dividing wall to split a large room into two rooms. We have not had the opportunity to implement our 15/16 grant. Can we apply for the 2016-2017 grant for “Phase 2” to replace the HVAC and lighting? If so, how should we explain the 2016-2017 grant project if we have not yet implemented the 2015-2016 projects?**

Phase 1 and Phase 2 must be kept separate for the purposes of the grant. This will also be essential for proper invoicing if your project is approved for 16-17 grant funding. Consider Phase 2 as a separate project and describe how this project is part of an ongoing renovation that began with 2015-16 grant funds.

VII. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. May application materials be faxed to the Department for consideration?**

Applications and attachments are to be submitted on a flash drive or via multiple emails as described in the Application Submission Instructions.

VIII. AWARD DISPERSAL

- 1. May a non-profit organization administer the funds on behalf of the SCC? The centers each apply for the grant with support letters from both the AAA and the non-profit organization.**

The funds will be awarded through a grant agreement with the legal entity of the SCC accountable for administering the funds. If the non-profit organization is not the legal entity of the SCC, then they would not be allowed to administer funds on behalf of the SCC.

- 2. Will funds awarded to successful applicants be funneled through the AAA?**

Funds will be awarded to the grantee that is considered the legal entity accountable to administer the funds. Depending on the situation, this may or may not be the AAA.

- 3. Will the webinar presentation be available to print out?**

A link to the recorded presentation will be available on the PDA website as well as a link to a printable slide presentation.