



Massachusetts Councils On Aging

Date: December 17, 2019

To: Members of the Massachusetts Councils on Aging

From: Mary Kay Browne and Kathy Bowler - Member Services

Re: Request for Applications for FY'20 Funding for Organizing and Hosting Month-Long Educational / Social Activities Focused upon Diverse Cultures

MCOA seeks applications from COAs who want to conduct 2 or 3 month-long educational and social activities all exploring a diverse culture —its history, dress, food, music, textiles, poetry, etc. Grants of \$300 (up to \$125 per event maximum) will be awarded to 30 Councils on Aging; the grant is designed to contribute about 50% towards the costs for each month's portfolio of activities.

Applications are due by COB Friday January 24, 2020. See the application instructions below for how to apply.

Background:

The United States is comprised of immigrants from countries all around the globe. These grants are designed to help you create a rich cultural education and celebration practice in your center. The funds may be used for supplies or people involved in the month long activities, such as music, educational speakers, films, posters, décor and paper supplies, flags, books, sample clothing or other textiles, cultural food samples for social events, or other similar components. **This is a terrific way to make your centers welcoming places for all!**

Here are examples of ways you can bring rich cultural resources and understanding into their community life:

- Convene a team to decide with you upon the 2 or 3 cultures they would like to learn about – some were selected to learn more about the social background of some of their neighbors who grew up abroad before moving to the United States.
- The setup of a “culture corner display” with a table and wall space to showcase

maps, sample clothing or pottery, artwork, other distinct items, posters of the landscape, and much more.

- If someone in your community has clothing or other artifacts to share, invite them to loan it to your center's display for the month.
- Identify someone in the community who can talk about what it was like to grow up there and share stories from their childhood.
- Play traditional music from the country of origin in your center – for special events as well as ongoing activities.
- Identify books – historic fiction or nonfiction - that depict the social life of the country and convene a discussion group for those who want to share their observations.
- Think about integrating new music from diverse cultures into your center's core activities, such as meals, exercise groups, parties, art shows, fashion shows, musical programs, etc.
- The Templeton Senior Center created a simple folded booklet called a "Passport" in which they placed stickers when the celebrant participated in each new cultural celebration.

In addition to the suggestions above, **mandatory program components** include:

1. Organize events and gather and display educational materials that focus upon a new country for a month long period.
2. Focus upon 2 or 3 countries by the end of June 2020.
3. Display educational materials AND host interactive social activities – BOTH modes should both be used. (Adults learn through different modalities – some prefer reading/use of site, while others prefer auditory training/music and talks). Display educational materials on a community table and/or wall displays.
4. Feature at least 1 live speaker who can provide information about country of origin, what it was like to live there and grow up there, and what are the newsworthy issues happening there now. Encourage questions and discussion among participants.
5. Participate in 2 conference calls with the other COA event planners to swap ideas (one in early February before events) and to share experiences (second call in late June, after all the events).
6. Send invoices for reimbursement after each event to MCOA. Invoices must be accompanied by a short, written description of the culture celebrated, artifacts gathered and displayed, the various activities you hosted during that month, and the attendance figures at gatherings. These summaries are very important as we want others to be able to follow in your creative footsteps. Photos are encouraged!

MCOA Grant Process

MCOA will award grants through an open competitive application process. Grants will be made pending available funding from the FY2020 Service Incentive Grant from Elder Affairs. COAs who apply must be members of MCOA and up to date on MCOA dues for FY20.

Awards made will be announced by January 31, 2020, and projects can begin any time after the award is issued. This series of celebrations must be completed by, and funds must be expended by June 30, 2020. MCOA shall apply for continuation funding from Elder Affairs to sustain this program (with \$600 per site in FY2021); however, at this point in time, we cannot guarantee that the funding will be continued after June 30, 2020.

Application Instructions

To apply, respond to all questions (below) and then insert your answers into the MCOA application form on the MCOA website (the www.mcaonline.com website URL is: <https://fs16.formsite.com/mcoa/c5ergg6p7p/index.html>).

Program Applications must be entered via the MCOA Website no later than close of business on Friday, January 24, 2020. The upload site can be accessed here: <https://fs16.formsite.com/mcoa/c5ergg6p7p/index.html>

Applications will be reviewed and grant awards announced by email to the primary contact of the applicant no later than January 31, 2020.

Please prepare the answers to the following 9 questions:

1. Information about the Applicant
 - Applicant Organization's Name
 - Mailing Address
 - Applicant's Primary Contact by name, position title, and phone and email address.
2. Why do you think the cultural education and celebrations will benefit older adults who attend your senior center and/or live in your town?
3. Who will organize these activities? Please provide their name, email address and phone number. Also, confirm that they can attend a monthly conference call at 3 PM on the fourth Tuesday of each month.
4. How soon could convene a small team of older adults in your community who will

advise you on which cultures to celebrate and may agree to help gather educational materials and artifacts for the program series.

5. Which cultural groups might you focus upon during this period?
 - a. List the culture.
 - b. Estimate number of older adults from each group that reside in your town.
 - c. Further, to the best of your understanding, identify which languages in addition to English are likely spoken in the homes of these older adults.
6. Please estimate which cultures your team might focus upon in this 5 month span? Your answer will not limit you; however, it will help MCOA learn which cultures may be celebrated so we may lend support (e.g. perhaps with materials, a speaker, and/or connecting you with other event planners focusing upon the same cultures).
7. Have you previously conducted educational and/or celebratory events focused upon culture? If so, please explain what lessons you learned from that experience that will shape how you go about it now, (if you receive funding).
8. Do you have bilingual staff? If yes, which languages do they speak?
9. Are there other organizations in your town you might include and/or enlist as a co-convenor in your activities? Yes or No. If yes, please name who they are and which cultural groups they represent.

General questions about the application process itself or your COA's eligibility may be directed to Lynn Wolf, at lynn@mcoaonline.com, or to Shari Cox at shari@mcoaonline.com.