MS 720 Peace Corps Small Grants

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**Table of Contents**

1.0 Purpose

2.0 Authority

3.0 Policy

4.0 Budget and Costs

5.0 Lost, Stolen, Misused, or Unaccounted for Funds

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

7.0 Implementing Procedures

8.0 Effective Date

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**Attachments**

Attachment A Peace Corps Small Grants Program Staff Handbook
Attachment B Peace Corps Small Grants Program Volunteer Handbook
1.0 Purpose

This Manual Section sets out the policies for the Peace Corps Small Grants Program. Implementing procedures are set forth in the attached handbooks and guidelines.

2.0 Authority

22 U.S.C. §§ 2501(a) and 2509 (a)(1), (4) of the Peace Corps Act

3.0 Policy

3.1 Small Grants Program.

The Small Grants Program is a mechanism that enables posts to better support and enhance the Peace Corps approach to development and to more thoroughly monitor, evaluate, and report on Volunteer assisted projects. Small Grants Program projects are supported by different funding sources and offices at Headquarters and share the goal of developing and implementing sustainable grassroots projects that build capacity in communities where Volunteers serve. Examples of the Small Grants Program include the Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP), Small Project Assistance (SPA), and the Volunteer Activities Support and Training (VAST).

3.2 Small Grants Program Requirements.

3.2.1. Small Grants projects support and enhance the capacity of Volunteers to more effectively execute the goals of the Peace Corps. To create strong and lasting community-initiated projects in line with the Peace Corps approach to development, a project must:

(a) be community initiated and directed;
(b) meet a determined community need;
(c) promote capacity building;
(d) include indicators of success through monitoring, reporting, and evaluation;
(e) incorporate cross sector programming priorities (CSPPs) where feasible;
(f) support a stand-alone activity with definite start and end dates and concrete goals and objectives;
(g) be scheduled for completion within one year and to end at least three months before the Volunteer’s close of service (COS) date;
(h) not exceed U.S. $10,000 in funding from the Small Grants Program, except as authorized by the appropriate Regional Director and the Associate Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP) or the Director of the Office of Global Health and HIV/AIDS (OGHH) for VAST projects; and
(i) include a community contribution of at least 25-percent of the total estimated project cost.

3.2.1. Volunteers are permitted to work with third party organizations on Small Grants Program projects. Funds from the Small Grants Program may not be awarded or granted to any party on the Specially Designated Nationals List.

3.3 Small Grants Program Projects that Require Special Consideration.

(a) Scholarship Programs – Scholarship projects must include a plan which demonstrates long-term administration and sustainability once project funding is at an end. Volunteers may assist in creating a selection process and committee, however may not participate in the selection process.
(b) Training and Skill Building Camps - Volunteers may provide training and skills building in a camp-like setting; however, they should consult the Youth Camps Manual: GLOW and Other Leadership Camps [ICE No. M0100] before planning and implementing such a project.

4.0 Budget and Costs

4.1 Budget. The Small Grants Program project budget must cover all costs of the project. Such budget should include all Small Grants Program funding, the community contribution, and any contributions from third parties.

4.2 Community Contribution. The 25% community contribution may include cash or in-kind donations of labor or supplies, or a combination thereof.

4.3 Small Grants Program-Funded Project Costs. Small Grants Program-funded project costs must be reasonable, related to the goals and objectives of each project and consistent with the project budget.
4.4 Limitations on Small Grants Program-Funded Project Costs. The following costs may not be included as a Small Grants Program-Funded project cost:

(a) Land and other capital assets
(b) Loan funds
(c) “Sub-grants” or re-granting Small Grants Program Funds
(d) Contingency/Undefined funds
(e) Alcoholic beverages
(f) Recurring costs

4.5 Costs that require Country Director Approval. As noted in the Small Grants Program Staff and Volunteer Handbooks, certain costs require preliminary approval before they may be included in a Small Grants Program project budget. These costs include, but are not limited to: giveaways, prizes, motor vehicles, Volunteer costs, and international travel.

4.6 Authorization for Expenditures. Volunteers may not commit Peace Corps funding until the funds are disbursed by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO).

5.0 Lost, Stolen, Misused or Unaccounted for Funds

5.1 Reporting of Lost, Stolen, Misused or Unaccounted for Funds. Post staff must expeditiously report all lost, stolen, misused or unaccounted Small Grants Program funds to the appropriate Small Grants Coordinator (see 6.3 (c)), determined by the project’s funding source. The Small Grants Coordinator will then report the issue to the Office of Inspector General in accordance with MS 861 Office of Inspector General and the Small Grants Program Staff Handbook.

5.2 Volunteer Liability Upon Receipt of Funds. The Volunteer is responsible for the Small Grants Program funds transferred into his/her account and will be liable for any such funds not accounted for appropriately at the end of the project. See Small Grants Program Staff Handbook, “Returning Funds” section for debt collection procedure.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP)

OSP administers and manages the Small Grants Program in coordination with relevant headquarters offices.

6.2 Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)
OCFO is responsible for supporting all Small Grants Program financial management and maintaining financial systems related to the Small Grants Program.

6.3 Peace Corps Posts

(a) The **Country Director (CD)** is responsible for:

1) Establishing any post-specific Small Grants Program requirements consistent with the requirements set forth in this manual section, and guidance set forth in the Small Grants Program Staff Handbook;
2) Establishing a Small Grants Committee at post;
3) Reviewing and providing final approval for each Small Grants Program application and completion report;
4) Approving any applicable exceptions (such as use of Small Grants Program funds) and project changes; and
5) Designating a staff member to be the post’s Small Grants Coordinator(s).

(b) The **Director of Management and Operations (DMO)** is responsible for the financial administration of Small Grants Program funds. The DMO certifies that Small Grants Program–funded costs were reasonable and in accordance with the goals and objectives of each Small Grants Program project and the project budget.

(c) The **Small Grants Coordinator(s)** is responsible for day-to-day administration of Small Grants Program projects at post and serves as the primary Small Grants Program contact at post for Volunteers, other post staff, and Peace Corps/headquarters.

(d) The **Small Grants Committee** at post is responsible for reviewing and initial approval of all Small Grants Program applications.

(e) The **Volunteer** is responsible for the full lifecycle of the Small Grants Program project and must submit an application to request funds and a completion report to officially close the project. If a Volunteer cannot complete a project he/she may request a transfer of responsibility to a willing Volunteer with the Country Director’s permission. If a Volunteer cannot transfer the project to another Volunteer, he/she may cancel the project, submit a completion report for the work that was completed and return any unused funds.
Volunteers are prohibited from accepting gifts on behalf of the Peace Corps. Volunteers may, however, promote approved Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) projects among their family and friends in accordance with Peace Corps guidance. Volunteers should refer any other potential donor to the Country Director. The Country Director may then work with GGM and OGC to determine whether the gift is appropriate and how best to receive the donation.

7.0 Implementing Procedures - Small Grants Program Staff and Volunteer Handbooks

Procedures implementing this Manual Section are contained in the Small Grants Program Staff and Volunteer Handbooks. Revisions to such Handbooks must be approved by the Office of Strategic Partnerships, Office of Global Operations, Office of Chief Financial Officer, and the Office of the General Counsel.

8.0 Effective Date

The effective date is the date of issuance.