Request for Proposals
Radiation Response Volunteer Corps Development

Summary

The Conference of Radiation Control (CRCPD) invites proposals from state radiation control programs, health department preparedness programs or local non-government organizations partnering with radiation control and public health programs to incorporate volunteer radiation professionals into existing health volunteer response programs. The purpose of the project is to recruit, train and manage a cadre of volunteer radiation professionals and to promote a volunteer registry of those individuals for use in radiation emergencies within the states, primarily for population monitoring and shelter needs. Funding assistance will be provided through sub-grants for radiation response volunteer corps initiatives and may be used for infrastructure needs, outreach to and solicitation and credentialing of radiation professionals in the state, development of communication systems, and provision of training.

Funding/Awards

CRCPD has entered a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that will provide funding for the project. CRCPD anticipates the award of at least 10 sub-awards during each year of the projects, of less than $25,000 each, depending on the availability of funds and the quality and number of proposals received.

Background

State and local agencies are responsible for public health and safety during radiological incidents. The National Response Framework has identified population monitoring, among other duties, as a local and state responsibility. In the event of a major radiological incident, state and local radiation control and emergency response program resources would be quickly overwhelmed by the large number of citizens needing evaluation for contamination.

One method of supplementing state and local resources is through use of local volunteer radiation professionals who could provide assistance at community reception centers, shelters for displaced populations, emergency operations centers, hospitals, and communications facilities. There are tens of thousands of radiation professionals living and working in nearly every community across the country who could volunteer to assist their local and state public health and emergency management authorities in the event of a large nuclear/radiological incident. The infrastructure for such a volunteer effort exists in the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) which is a part of the Citizen Corps program. There are already more than 950 MRC units in operation with over 200,000 trained volunteer members including active and retired physicians, nurses, and public health professionals among other types of volunteers (www.medicalreservecorps.gov). The MRC program has proven to be a valuable asset in local public health preparedness for pandemic influenza
and for assisting in operation of Points of Dispensing sites for the purpose of distributing Strategic National Stockpile assets.

There is a need to raise awareness of the benefits and necessity of using volunteer radiation professionals to assist state and local authorities with population monitoring activities during a radiological emergency. Most state radiation control programs and the radiation professionals with whom they interact are not aware that volunteer programs such as MRC exist and how that existing infrastructure can assist them in radiation emergency planning. Additionally, most public health planners are not aware that a large pool of radiation professionals willing to assist exists. Most MRC leaders are not aware of the role their units can play in helping communities respond in a radiation emergency.

A few state radiation control programs and state agencies have been able to incorporate volunteer programs into their emergency response plans and the Incident Command Structure. Although volunteer programs have been initiated in several states and New York City, volunteer registries for radiation professionals is still a new concept in most states and jurisdictions. Several new State and local programs have added this capability through the RRVC program with CRCPD.

With minimal training on roles, responsibilities, and procedures associated with addressing population monitoring and public shelter needs, the addition of these knowledgeable radiation specialists to volunteer registries will strengthen local and State capacity to respond at the local levels where State and Federal resources may not be sufficient to meet the needs of large populations throughout many communities. Incorporation of these trained radiation volunteers into existing volunteer programs and emergency response plans will require outreach to raise awareness among radiation control programs, the radiation professional community, public health planners and MRC leaders; recruitment efforts at the state and local level; collaboration among the agencies and volunteer programs for planning, training and exercising.

**Goals of the Program**

The primary objective of this project is to promote development of self-sustaining volunteer emergency response programs that include volunteer radiation protection professionals. This project addresses use of volunteer radiation professionals working with state and local governmental radiation control and emergency response agencies specifically for purposes of population monitoring and public shelter needs during radiological/nuclear events. The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Raise awareness of the benefits and necessity of using volunteer radiation professionals to assist state and local authorities with population monitoring activities during a radiological emergency.
- Expand existing volunteer recruitment activities to include volunteer radiation professionals for use in population monitoring activities and shelter needs during a radiological event.
- Develop or enhance collaborations among volunteer radiation professionals and existing health volunteer programs through planning, training and exercising.
• Develop a sustainable action plan for continued and expanded use of the program.

Radiation professionals include health physicists, medical physicists, radiation protection technologists, nuclear medicine technologists, radiologic technologists, oncologists, radiation biologists and others. With additional training, as appropriate, these radiation professionals can assist in population monitoring and support of shelter operations in the communities where they live.

This project addresses use of volunteer radiation professionals specifically for purposes of population monitoring and shelter needs during radiological events to:

Scope

In order to develop a process for recruiting, managing and training volunteer radiation professionals, promote a volunteer registry of radiation professionals, the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Inc. (CRCPD) will sub-contract with state radiation control programs, health department preparedness programs or local non-government organizations (NGO’s) partnering with state radiation control programs to incorporate volunteer radiation professionals into existing volunteer response programs within their state. In case fewer than 10 acceptable proposals are received from state or local programs or qualifying NGO’s that do not currently have an existing volunteer radiation professional program, CRCPD will consider projects from those state or local agencies that have existing programs for program enhancement.

The general scope of work and selection process is described below. The funding assistance provided through the sub-awards for state radiation response volunteer corps initiatives may be used for infrastructure needs, outreach to and solicitation of radiation professionals in the state, development of communication systems, and provision of training. CRCPD also plans to provide outreach and collaboration with the Medical Reserve Corps on a national and state-by-state basis. CRCPD and CDC will provide training outlines that have been developed, helpful hints from states that have had experience with a radiation response volunteer corps, and other information useful to this project.

Applicants for a sub-award are asked to provide plans for:

- Incorporating radiation professionals into existing volunteer registries and/or programs
- Orienting volunteer radiation professionals to the emergency response activities and requirements within existing volunteer response organizations. Example: Core Competencies outlined by the MRC at http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/File/MRC%20TRAIN/Core%20Competency%20Resources/Core_Competencies_Matrix_April_2007.pdf
CRCPD will provide assistance in coordinating contacts between the state radiological response agencies and coordinators of existing volunteer response organizations.

- Providing training and/or exercising of volunteers on state emergency response plans and the radiation volunteer’s role under that plan during a radiological emergency (e.g., population monitoring).
- Promoting a volunteer registry of radiation professionals within existing registries and/or programs through:
  - Establishment of relationships with regional, state, and/or local chapters of radiation professional organizations, such as the Health Physics Society (HPS), American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM), Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM), American Society for Radiology Oncology (ASTRO), American College of Radiology (ACR), National Registry of Radiation Protection Technologists (NRRPT), and the American Nuclear Society (ANS).
  - Outreach to radiation protection professionals in the state (e.g., health physicists, medical physicists, radiological protection technologists, and nuclear medicine technologists) by email distribution, mail distribution, newsletter announcements, and/or attending local professional meetings or conferences.

Proposal Format

Proposals for sub-awards under this project should following the following outline. Criteria for completeness and selection are shown in italics under each section heading.

a) Plan/Project Description

Plan should:
- Be adequate to carry out the proposed objective
- Be complete and comprehensive for entire project period
- Incorporate partnerships with other organizations

Other selection criteria:

Applicant’s prior experience with radiation professionals and volunteer management systems or programs

b) Methods and Activities

Selection criteria:
- Feasibility of activities
- Extent of planned goal accomplishment
- Extent to which methods and activities utilize existing infrastructure
- Integration of partners
- Potential for program sustainability or continuation beyond the dates of funding
- Practical recruitment strategies for radiation professionals
- Methods include statewide implementation
c) Organizational Profile and Staff

- Time commitment
- Staff experience

*Selection criteria:*
- Appropriate experience of staff
- Clearly defined staff roles
- Sufficient staff to accomplish program goals
- Degree that existing infrastructure supports training and project requirements

d) Evaluation Plan for Project

*Selection criteria:*
- Inclusion and completeness of evaluation plan that includes quantifiable performance measures
- Validity of performance measures
- Inclusion of quantitative process and outcome measures

e) Timeline

*Selection criteria:*
- Realistic timeline
- Completion falls within the Statement of Work

f) Budget narrative

*Selection criteria:*
- Demonstration of an efficient use of funding to accomplish project objectives

g) Proposed budget

**Reporting Requirements**

The selected agencies and NGOs will also be required to:

- Submit written progress reports on a quarterly basis to CRCPD’s Office of the Executive Director and to the Chair of the Task Force for Volunteer Development, including work performed and costs incurred.
- Submit a written report describing their approach, accomplishments, and impediments, and suggestions by three months following the end of the sub-award period.
- Provide input to the task force, based on the experience and lessons learned from the project, on a plan for effective deployment and utilization of volunteer radiation professions and methods for developing self-sustaining activities to ensure that the volunteer radiation professionals remain engaged.
Inquiries Regarding Proposals

Questions concerning proposals may be addressed to Ruth McBurney, CRCPD Executive Director, at rmcburney@crcpd.org. Frequently asked questions and responses concerning the RFP will be posted on the CRCPD web site. Example proposals will be sent to interested agencies and groups upon request.

How and When to Submit Proposals

All proposals must be sent to the CRCPD Office of the Executive Director, 1030 Burlington Lane, Suite 4B, Frankfort, KY 40601. Proposals may be sent through mail or delivery service to the address above or may be transmitted electronically by e-mail attachment to Ruth McBurney, CRCPD Executive Director, at rmcburney@crcpd.org. Proposals will be received and reviewed throughout the year, and prioritized for award according to the selection criteria and available funding.