

To: Members of the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging  
 From: Mary Kay Browne, Director of Special Projects  
 Date: June 12, 2017  
 Re: Seeking Requests for Proposals from MCOA Members - Due Date July 14, 2017

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We are releasing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for making Direct Grants to COAs for FY2018, contingent upon receipt of sufficient funding under the Service Incentive Grant award to MCOA from the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs. MCOA invests in local and regional projects to:

- Provide seed money to COAs who wanting to start new innovative services;
- Encourage regional collaboration between Councils on Aging and/or other organizations in delivering vital services not available currently; and/or
- Meet other administrative or programmatic needs of COAs and the older adults they serve.

The programs included in this RFP are described below. These programs are easy to host; MCOA has developed full program toolkits to guide you in how to implement each program.

<p><b>50+ Job Seekers Coaching and Networking Group</b></p> <p>We seek proposals from COAs who want to become a host site for a regional 50+ Job Seekers Coaching and Networking Group.</p> <p>We invite bidders from all counties, especially COAs located in counties which are currently not hosting a regional 50+ Job Seeker Groups, including Essex, Worcester, Middlesex, Norfolk, Bristol, Suffolk, Hampden, and Hampshire County. Typically, the program runs for about 2 hours every other week; between 10-20 people attend.</p>	<p><b>Holding a “Live Your Life Well” Resiliency Educational Event</b></p> <p>We seek proposals from COAs who have not yet hosted a Live Your Life Well program.</p> <p>This program features 10 small group discussions with several group leaders who share tips under each topic and then lead a discussion with the group members on how to adopt healthier habits to stay resilient in the face of life’s hurdles. Typically, the program runs for about 4 hours with lunch in the middle. Between 30-40 people attend.</p>
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**Instructions**

- Grants will be made pending available funding from the FY18 Service Incentive Grant from Elder Affairs. This solicitation is being released now so we can complete the application and contract process in advance and be prepared whenever FY18 funding is finalized.
- MCOA will award grants through an open competitive application process.
- Grant opportunities are available to all eligible COAs or a non-profit organization that has a formal partnership with local COAs to implement a regional service. Eligibility COAs are members of MCOA that are up to date on their MCOA dues for the current fiscal year. The

partnership would detail in writing details for how the partners would share in program management.

- We encourage you to talk with your regional peers and partners about their interest in promoting and/or co-hosting a regional 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group, as the co-hosting model allows you to share the on-site host responsibilities (e.g. alternating meeting locations) as well as advertising work.
  - Program Applications are due July 14, 2017.
  - To apply, complete the required application form at [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com).
  - Before submitting a Direct Grant Application for either program, interested applicants should request and review each program toolkit – to do so, send your request via email to [Shari@mcoaonline.com](mailto:Shari@mcoaonline.com) . The toolkits will include all the programs’ implementation details including space and supply needs, participant evaluations forms and site reporting duties.
  - Grant awards will be made by August 20, 2017. A training for the regional 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group site leaders will occur as soon as final funding is confirmed.
  - All contracts are “Cost Reimbursement” contracts, meaning the COAs must incur costs and submit invoices for reimbursement.
  - Final program summary reports from project grantees will be due to MCOA by July 15, 2018.
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**MCOA FY2018 DIRECT GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM**

**DUE BY JULY 14, 2017**

Contact Person's Name & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/ Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**ELIGIBILITY:**

- A. Are you a member of MCOA? Yes  No
- B. Are your membership dues paid in full for this Fiscal Year? Yes  No
- C. Have you ever hosted the *Live Your Life Well Program*? Yes  No

If you have any questions about your eligibility in this grant round please contact Shari Cox of MCOA by email at [Shari@mcoaonline.com](mailto:Shari@mcoaonline.com) or phone at 413-527-6425.

**The applicant is applying to host the following programs:**

Host a bi-weekly regional 50+ Job Seekers Networking and Coaching Group  <input type="checkbox"/> For \$500 or <input type="checkbox"/> For 1,000 with Job Fair	Host a Live Your Life Well Event (for \$300)
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**(Required)** I have received and read the full program toolkit from MCOA.

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Grants will be made if sufficient funding is received under the FY'18 Service Incentive Grant to MCAO from the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs.*

Please go to the Application Portal on [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com) to answer all of these questions online. If you have any questions on how to do that, please call Shari Cox, Grants Coordinator, or Lynn Wolf, Communications Manager at 413-527-6425. Thank you.

## **ADDITIONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS FOR THE REGIONAL 50+ JOB SEEKERS COACHING AND NETWORKING GROUP ONLY:**

**PLEASE PREPARE THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS IN A WORD DOCUMENT; THEN UPLOAD THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT TO THE APPLICATION PORTAL ON [WWW.MCOAONLINE.COM](http://www.mcoaonline.com).**

1. THE PROGRAM REQUIRES AN ONSITE STAFF PERSON TO SERVE AS A CO-FACILITATOR AND ASSUME THE FOLLOWING DUTIES 1) ROOM SET-UP; 2) GREET GROUP MEMBERS AS THEY ARRIVE; 3) SIGN IN ALL ATTENDEES, 4) HAVE ANY NEW ATTENDEES COMPLETE A REGISTRATION FORM; 5) COLLECT PARTICIPANT MEETING EVALUATION FORMS AT THE END OF THE MEETINGS, 6) MAKE COPIES OF MEETING FORMS, ARTICLES AND HANDOUTS FOR REGISTRATION TABLE AS NEEDED BY THE GROUP LEADER; 7) SEND OUT A BIWEEKLY EMAIL TO GROUP MEMBERS ABOUT THE UPCOMING SESSION; 8) SEND OUT A GROUP EMAIL TO CANCEL A MEETING, IN THE EVENT OF POOR WEATHER; AND 9) EMAIL THE SIGN IN SHEET, ANY REGISTRATION FORMS FOR NEW ATTENDEES, EVALUATION FORMS AND GROUP LEADER METRICS FORM TO PROGRAM MANAGER WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE MEETING

WHO ON YOUR STAFF WILL YOU ASSIGN TO PERFORM THESE DUTIES?

2. WHAT TIME OF DAY COULD YOU HOST THE NETWORKING GROUP FOR A 2.5 HOUR PERIOD BIWEEKLY (2 MEETINGS PER MONTH)?
3. DO YOU HAVE A COMPUTER LAB IN YOUR CENTER THAT JOB SEEKERS COULD USE DURING OR AFTER THE GROUP MEETING?

### **EXPERIENCE IN BENEFITS COUNSELING AND/OR JOB COUNSELING FOR OLDER ADULTS**

4. DO YOU CURRENTLY HELP OLDER ADULTS EXPLORE THEIR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS, BE IT VOLUNTEER OR PAID WORK? IF SO, PLEASE DESCRIBE.
5. DO YOU MANAGE THE SENIOR TAX WORK OFF PROGRAM IN YOUR TOWN?
6. WHEN YOUR CENTER STAFF HELP OLDER ADULTS FIND FINANCIAL BENEFITS TO HELP WITH PAYING ALL THEIR HOUSEHOLD BILLS, DO THEY ALSO EXPLORE EMPLOYMENT INCOME AS A SOLUTION WITH SOME OF THE PEOPLE THEY COUNSEL?
7. HAVE YOU EVER OFFERED THE 'WISDOM WORKS' PROGRAM? IF SO, DESCRIBE WHEN AND BY WHOM.

**REGIONAL COLLABORATORS:**

8. WILL YOU PARTNER WITH ANY OTHER COUNCIL ON AGING TO OFFER THIS PROGRAM, SUCH AS SWITCHING OFF AS MEETING SITE OR PROMOTING THE PROGRAM THROUGHOUT YOUR RESPECTIVE AREAS? IF SO, PLEASE IDENTIFY WHAT ADDITIONAL AGENCIES YOU WILL COLLABORATE WITH TO OFFER THE PROGRAM.
  
9. DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR REGIONAL CAREER CENTER? IF SO, EXPLAIN HOW YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO UTILIZE THEIR STAFF AND/OR SERVICES.
  
10. IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO QUESTION #9: DO YOU INTEND TO INCLUDE STAFF FROM YOUR REGIONAL CAREER CENTER AS A PARTNER, SUCH AS SERVING AS A GUEST TRAINER, OR ORGANIZING A JOB FAIR OR SUPPLYING YOU GROUP LEADER WITH JOB LISTINGS? IF SO, PLEASE DESCRIBE.

## MCOA DIRECT GRANTS FOR FY2018 - SHORT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

REQUEST THE PROGRAM TOOLKIT FOR A FULL DESCRIPTION – EMAIL [MARYKAY@MCOAONLINE.COM](mailto:MARYKAY@MCOAONLINE.COM)

### **The 50+ Regional Job Seekers Networking and Coaching Program**

This program is designed to support and assist older workers, defined as anyone age 50 and older, who are actively engaged in a job search, a new career direction or an encore career after retirement. The groups are designed to provide job search skills, training and networking opportunities to older adults who are seeking a new job, whether or not they are currently unemployed or employed. And, due to the influence of age bias in the hiring decisions of many hiring managers, some of the topics are geared specifically to the challenges older workers face in landing interviews and new jobs.

This program provides job seekers with the opportunity to learn new job search skills, strategies and techniques necessary for landing a job in today's challenging labor market. Participants will learn how to develop a 30-second elevator pitch, create a LinkedIn profile, develop a functional resume, interview effectively and learn how to effectively network their way to a new jobs -- all unfamiliar to someone who has not searched for a job in a few years.

Since January 2016, MCOA has been working with a small group of COA managers and career coaches to design and pilot the program for older job seekers. MCOA relies upon Susan Drevitch Kelly, a career coach and expert in job search technique, to manage the program and lead the local group leaders in delivering the services. Serving as the Program Manager, she is also actively building partnerships with other stakeholders involved in the employment of older adults, including the Career Centers, the Encore Boston Network, Chambers of Commerce, large employers, human resources associations, and others.

Sample topics covered by the Group Leaders include:

- Self-Assessment/Discover Transferrable Skills
- Develop a Resume
- Create an Elevator Speech
- Develop Your LinkedIn Profile
- LinkedIn as a Networking Tool
- Networking 101
- Develop Your Marketing Plan
- Interview Preparation/Strategy
- Job Fair Boot Camp
- Overcome Ageism and Job Search Stress

#### **What MCOA Offers**

- The MCOA Project Manager will recruit and assign qualified professionals with extensive career coaching or HR experience to work as the Group Leaders at each of the selected program sites.
- MCOA will hire a Group Leader for each site and contract with each Leader directly.
- The MCOA Project Manager has produced all the essential regional 50+ Job Seekers Networking and Coaching Group meeting facilitation tools and materials in a detailed Operational Kit.
- The Group Leaders will be supported by MCOA project manager.

- The Group Leaders will capture program metrics, participate in group leader conference calls and meetings, and collaborate with the project manager about project management issues, and share information on group performance and participant outcomes with the project manager.

Potential bidders should read the full **50+ Job Seekers networking and Coaching Group Toolkit** – send your request for the toolkit to [MaryKay@MCOAonline.com](mailto:MaryKay@MCOAonline.com).

**The Council on Aging who applies for this grant is agreeing to do the following:**

- Become a local voice and champion FOR older workers and AGAINST ageism in the workplace.
- Provide space (tables and chairs) for bi-weekly program meetings for the group; ideal group size is 10-20 people. The bi-weekly programs run for 2 hours, with set up time on either end (so 2.5 hours total).
- Assign a staff person to serve as the site host and to support the bi-weekly meeting administrative duties (at the start and end of the meetings), and to issue 1-2 email reminders in the intervening weeks to group participants.
- Advertise the program meetings in local newspapers, town cable and radio, area newsletters, and other media.
- Provide pitchers of ice water and use of flip chart.
- While the Group Leaders will be paid directly by MCOA, the local COA manager must verify that the biweekly sessions have occurred.

The allowable costs for the networking meetings shall include printing handouts about job search tips and techniques, meeting promotional materials, (e.g. lawn signs, ads, posters), and other organizing expenses.

Though bidders are not required to **host a job fair**, those that do have a collaborative partnership with their local Career Center and promise to organize a job fair in the spring will be given **preference for funding**. Grants awards will be increased by \$500 to those wishing to organize a regional job fair for older workers during the project year. Some sites may decide to host a job fair in the spring of 2018. While a job fair is preferred as a wonderful culminating event for participants, it is not required.

The purpose of a job fair is to bring job seekers and employers together for a short, expedited screening process. Job seekers can ask the employer questions about the type of job openings it has and/or the employee skills the employer needs. Meanwhile, employers get to meet and assess a large number of prospective candidates from whom they may arrange follow-up interviews. The regional Career Centers organize job fairs throughout the year; they would be able to recruit all the employers, track the number of attendees, and best of all, follow up with employers after the job fair to learn how many job candidates who attended the job fair had an actual follow-up interview with an employer. For Career Centers, the post-fair interviews are an essential metric for measuring a job fair's success.

Typical (allowable) costs for job fairs include table and linen rentals, promotional flyers, event signage, resume paper if hosting a pre-job fair resume workshop, water/drinks for employers at the job fair, a

raffle door prize (capped at \$25) and other project planning expenses. Project sites are encouraged to use email marketing and direct mail post cards, in addition to the newspaper ads and signs on lawns.

Also, MCOA has a **Job Fair Toolkit** to support local project teams; it can be provided to any COA who wishes to organize an older worker job fair. It includes the following:

- contact information for all of the One Stop Career Centers
- job fair basics
- details on the roles for each partner in organizing a job fair
- a sample letter to solicit employers and gift card donations to award as raffle prizes
- a sample outreach flyer and other outreach tools

### **Hosting a “Live Your Life Well” Half-Day Event for 30-40 People to Learn and Share Tips for Building Up Resiliency for Facing Life’s Hurdles:**

Councils on Aging are experts at convening in-person educational programs. In this event, participants will meet with and then learn from multiple subject matter experts as well as all the other participants about ways to maintain one’s resiliency. The Live Your Life Well program grant will award you a \$300 grant to support the costs for hosting this event; allowable costs are printing of program materials, food supplies, and food/snacks. The program features small group discussions with a group leader who can share some tips under each topic and who will lead discussions with the group on how to adopt healthier habits in 10 topics. The 10 topics are: get plenty of rest, get physically active, eat well, connect with others, pursue a creative interest, help others, reduce stress, exercise your mind, take better care of your spirit and get professional help if you need it. After each discussion period, attendees will be asked to write down what steps they will take to change their own habits. In addition to great learning, attendees also get a great opportunity to form new fellowship with a small group of peers with whom they spend the entire day exploring fresh topics and problem solving personal situations.

This program was designed by the Cape COAST (Councils on Aging Serving Together) several years ago; MCOA re-created it so more COAs could offer this dynamic program each year. MCOA re-created a **Live Your Life Well Toolkit** with publicity materials for your use, an program outline to help the facilitator plan for and roll out the event, participant surveys to capture the impact of the program upon participants, and other materials to use during the event. The marketing materials include this tag line: ***“Live Your Life Well - You can handle life’s hurdles. We can show you how.”***