

NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Election Assistance Commission
Funding Opportunity Title: 2010 Help America Vote Act Mock Election
Announcement Type: Notice of Funds Availability
CFDA No.: 90.402
Application Deadline Tuesday, March 9, 2010 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Funding Opportunity Description: The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) announces the availability of \$300,000 in grant funds to organize, administer and support mock elections for high school students.

The purpose of the program is to allow students to become familiar with voting processes and technologies so that when they become eligible to vote they will be more comfortable with their civic duties. EAC is particularly interested in funding opportunities that promote the use of voting machines through partnerships with local election officials. Project funds must be used for tasks and activities that are carried out without partisan bias and without promoting any particular political point of view regarding any election issue or candidate.

Up to approximately \$300,000 in total will be awarded to approximately 8-12 organizations to expand existing mock election programs for the 2010 election. Proposals should include a one-year project plan and budget which proposes holding mock elections for the 2010 election cycle. EAC will make 3 year awards with funds available for the first year of operation. Funding in year two and three is subject to funds availability, substantial progress towards agreed upon performance measures and EAC annual funding priorities.

This assistance is being offered under the Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (PL 111-117), which provides funds for EAC to award competitive grants for operating a program of simulated elections for students in secondary education programs.

These grants will be administered under the Office of Management and Budget uniform administrative requirements and cost principles applicable to the organization that receives the assistance.

Eligibility: The competition is open to: 1) state and local election offices, 2) regional and national non-profit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in partnership with state or local election offices, and 3) tribal organizations. For purposes of this competition, "state" means the 50 states in the United States, its four territories, and the District of Columbia.

2009 Mock Election grantees are only eligible to apply for grants under Section I.B. (Funds for Training, Material, Development and Dissemination) of this Notice.

Submission Dates and Times: The deadline for applications is **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, March 9, 2010**. Three copies of the application (one original and two copies) and an electronic version (PDF) on a CD or DVD must arrive at the EAC by this deadline. Alternatively, EAC will accept applications via e-mail submitted by the 5 p.m. deadline on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. The application must have an email time stamp by the deadline and include the entire application in one e-mail (multiple attachments in one email are acceptable). The document must be a Microsoft Word document or in PDF format. Submit applications to mockelections@eac.gov.

Please submit an e-mail stating your organization's intent to apply to mockelections@eac.gov before February 24, 2010.

Applications submitted by fax will not be accepted.

On February 16, 2010, EAC will host a technical assistance call to answer questions about this funding opportunity. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in a call. Call information is posted at the end of this *Notice*.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Description

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) was established by the [Help America Vote Act](#) of 2002 (HAVA). EAC is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, adopting [voluntary voting system guidelines](#), and serving as a [national clearinghouse](#) of information about election administration. EAC also accredits testing laboratories and certifies voting systems, as well as audits the use of HAVA funds.

In 2010 EAC will administer several grant programs designed to promote improvements to the administration of elections for Federal office and increase awareness of federal elections by addressing critical issues such as research into voting technology improvements that ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities, the shortage of poll workers and teaching young people about election processes and the importance of civic responsibility.

For this competition, EAC is seeking proposals from state governmental units, Indian tribes and nonprofit organizations to operate a program of simulated elections for students in secondary education around the country under the Help America Vote Mock Election Program.

The purpose of this initiative is to build community involvement in and awareness of voting processes including getting students more familiar with voting technologies. Funds will be provided to hold simulated elections that will be held five or more days

prior to the actual elections on November 2, 2010 or during the 2010 primary season.

Applicants with existing mock election programs must propose to use funds for new activities and demonstrate how federal funds will increase the reach and effectiveness of their programs, including increasing the number of students participating in the mock election and the type and quality of student activities running up to and after the vote. In other words, Federal funds under this competition cannot be used to replace local funding no longer available to the applicants program.

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the necessary partnerships with local election and school officials in place to develop and implement the program. Applicants must discuss the nature of their partnerships with state or local education agencies and local election offices including the extent to which the proposed program will work with election administrators to ensure that the voting systems used during the mock election are similar to voting systems used by voters in the project's covered area.

EAC is particularly interested in funding strategies that: 1) use electronic and social media tools to significantly increase student participation in the mock elections; 2) integrate more classroom learning into the mock election through supplementing, or adopting new, curriculum and other activities designed to increase students' understanding of election processes; and 3) encourage youth participation and leadership in the planning and administration of the mock election activities.

Examples of activities that can be supported by the grant include, but are not limited to:

- School forums and local cable call-in shows on the national issues to be voted on in an "issues forum"
- Speeches and debates before students and parents by local candidates or stand-ins for such candidates
- Quiz team competitions, mock press conferences and speech writing competitions
- Salary or stipend for school or local election office program coordinator
- Costs of materials, development and training

Applicants must propose a detailed one-year project plan and budget that proposes holding mock elections for the 2010 election cycle. The plan should address the above goals and show how the applicant will meet the performance measures requirements outlined in Section I.B. of this *Notice*.

B. Funds for Training Material Development and Dissemination

All applicants may request additional funds for the production of high quality video and other customized, automated online training materials based on curriculum developed during the program. Applicants must provide detailed plans and show evidence of partners or project staff experienced in developing this type of material. Applicants must identify in their narrative that they are planning to apply for additional funding for these activities. This is the only category of funding open to 2009 Mock Election Grantees.

2009 grantees must mark their applications as ‘Continuation’ application on the SF-424 form.

C. Performance Measures and Accountability

Applicants must propose yearly performance measures and targets that address at least the first three of the following measures:

1. Number of students that are anticipated to vote in the mock election.
2. Number of new schools and students taking part in the program (for applicants with existing programs).
3. Number of schools that will use voting machines (not a requirement, but highly encouraged) for the mock elections.
4. Other measure(s) as identified by the applicants as evidence of the success of the initiative.

D. Authority

Support for the activities described in this *Notice* is authorized under Section 295 of Title II, Subtitle D, Part 6 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (42 USC 15471). Funding for the awards made under this *Notice* will be provided from appropriations made available under the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2010 (P.L. 111-117).

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Anticipated Total Funding: \$300,000

Anticipated Number of Awards: approximately 8-12 one-year operating grants up to \$25,000 each

Funding Maximum for Local Programs: \$25,000

Funding Maximum for Statewide Programs: \$50,000

Funding Minimum for Local Programs: \$15,000

Funding Minimum for Statewide Programs: \$30,000

Supplemental Funds for online training, material, development and dissemination, for all applicants (including 2009 Mock Election Recipients): up to \$25,000 in addition to above limits.

Grant Period: up to 36 months.

A. Number of Awards and Award Amount

EAC is planning to make approximately 8-12 operating awards under this *Notice*. EAC

reserves the right to change the amounts, number of awards, and grant period of the awards made under this competition. EAC is not restricted to these projections and may deviate from the number of awards and amounts stated in this *Notice* depending upon the quality of the applicant pool.

B. Award Period and Future Funding

Successful applicants will receive a three-year operating grant, with operating funds for the first year. Funds for years two and three are subject to funds availability, substantive progress towards agreed upon performance measures and Commission priorities for the year. Instructions for how to apply for years two and three funds as a ‘Continuation’ grantee will be available in the future.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for this federal assistance is a three-year competitive grant.

D. Other Requirements/Limitations

Applicants may not use any part of an award from the EAC to fund religious instruction, worship or proselytizing, voter registration, get out the vote (GOTV) drives or other political activities that could be construed as lobbying.

Project funds must be used for tasks and activities which are carried out without partisan bias and without promoting any particular political point of view regarding any election issue or candidates. Applications that propose voter registration or get out the vote (GOTV) efforts will be considered non-responsive and will not be eligible for funding under this announcement.

Pre-award costs can be requested by any applicant approved for funding under this *Notice*.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this program.

E. Cost Sharing or Matching

Matching funds are not required. However applicants that demonstrate community/stakeholder participation in the program and long term sustainability of the program through use of non-federal cash match and eligible in-kind support for the program will be given priority consideration by EAC.

F. Application Selection Criteria

In awarding grants under this *Notice*, EAC will consider:

- Program Design (50%)
- Organizational Capacity (35%)
- Budget/Cost Effectiveness (15%)

1. Program Design/Strategy

EAC will consider the quality of the proposed design based on:

- a) The soundness, relevance, and creativity of the applicant’s one-year plan.

- b) The applicant's approach to measuring achievement of outcomes and how data collected will be used to modify and improve strategies, products and services.
- c) The applicant's approach and expertise in using innovative solutions to implement new, or expand existing, mock election efforts, especially as it relates to the use of technology and use of social media tools to cost effectively engage students in participating in mock election activities.
- d) The extent to which the proposed program will work with election administrators to ensure that the voting systems used during the mock election are similar to the voting systems used by voters in the project's covered area.
- e) The scope of the mock election project including the number of targeted secondary education students.

2. Organizational Capacity

EAC will consider the capacity of the applicant to deliver the proposed services based on:

- a) Demonstrated relationships/partnerships with relevant state and local entities needed to make the project successful.
- b) Ability to manage a federal grant as evidenced by previous grants experience.
- c) Experience with similar mock election projects including experience working with students in secondary education programs.
- d) Relevant experience of the organization and staff as evidenced by brief staff biographies and other past organizational successes.

3. Budget/Cost Effectiveness

EAC will consider the budget based on:

- a) Cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities in relation to the scope of the project (e.g. number of schools, voting precincts and students voting).
- b) Clarity and completeness of the budget and budget narrative.

EAC will make all final decisions concerning awards and may require revisions to the grant proposal in order to achieve the objectives under this *Notice*.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

The competition is open to: 1) state election offices, 2) regional and national non-profit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in partnership with local election offices and 3) tribal organizations. For purposes of this competition, "state" means the 50 states in the United States, its four territories, and the District of Columbia.

Applicants that received funding in 2009 are only eligible to apply under Section I.B., (Funds for training material development and dissemination).

B. Other Eligibility Requirements

Lobbying: Any organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Submission of Application Package

This *Notice* contains all application instructions needed to complete the application. This *Notice* is available at: www.eac.gov or by e-mailing mockelections@eac.gov. You may also view this grant announcement at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Each mailed application package must include an original and two copies of the complete application as well as a digital copy on a CD or DVD. EAC will accept applications via e-mail submitted by the 5 p.m. deadline on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. The application must be time stamped by the deadline and include the entire application in one e-mail (multiple attachments in the same email are acceptable. The document must be a Microsoft Word document or in PDF format. Submit applications to [**mockelections@eac.gov**](mailto:mockelections@eac.gov).

B. Form and Content of Submissions

The applicant must provide a well-designed plan with a clear and compelling justification for awarding the requested funds. The narratives must cover the one-year project period for which the applicant is requesting approval.

Note: No additional information beyond what is requested in this section will be accepted with this application. Letters of support as evidence of partnerships are not allowed at the time of application, but may be requested by EAC during the review process. Applicants should describe in careful detail the nature of their partnerships and how those partnerships will advance the goals of the project in the application narrative.

The maximum length for the Executive Summary is 1,500 characters. The maximum combined length for the Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Budget/Cost Effectiveness is 15,000 characters (approximately 8 double-spaced pages).

The application must be typed and double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins.

The application consists of the following components in the following order:

1. Standard Form 424 Core Facesheet
2. Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A, REV 4-92)
3. Budget Narrative—detailed description of budget items found in SF 424 A (no form required for budget narrative)
4. Assurances—Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B, REV 4-92)

5. Executive Summary Narrative (maximum length – 1,500 characters¹)
6. Narratives: (maximum length for combined narratives – 15,000 characters)
 - a. Program Design
 - b. Organizational Capacity
 - c. Budget/Cost Effectiveness
7. Certification on Lobbying
<http://www.eac.gov/program-areas/grants/certification-regarding-lobbying/>

All Federal forms can be found at:

http://www07.grants.gov/agencies/approved_standard_forms.jsp

Should there be any inconsistency between this *Notice* and the Application Instructions below; the order of precedence is as follows:

1. *Notice*
2. Application Instructions

1. Executive Summary Narrative

Provide a concise overview of the proposed project that summarizes the need, the proposed strategy for addressing the need, anticipated outcomes/accomplishments and how the outcomes will be achieved and measured.

2. Program Design Narrative

Background. Briefly describe your organization’s mission, accomplishments, and beneficiaries. Describe the community need(s) your project will work on.

Proposed Design/Strategy. Describe your approach to addressing the program described in the *Notice*. Your strategy should also address:

- a. The target population(s) of your proposed project including urban/rural location and any underrepresented groups that will be served;
- b. How your approach is innovative, and why it will be successful;
- c. What the expected outcomes are and how they will be measured.

Community Resources. Describe your strategy to secure previously untapped sources of private funds to build your program, including how you will use existing community resources including local election offices and local schools to implement your approach.

Program Participants. Describe the role(s) that both students and community volunteers will play in the project including the strategies you will use to recruit community volunteers.

3. Organizational Capacity

Program Management and Oversight. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has to manage the program proposed in this

¹ The character count includes all letters and punctuation (not spaces) in a document. One double-spaced, 12-point font page equals approximately 1,800 characters.

application. Who are the key staff members responsible for program oversight? What past experience does key staff have in securing previously untapped sources of private funds? Detail the responsibilities of each key staff member.

Fiscal Oversight. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has managing federal grants. What is your current overall organizational budget and what percentage of the budget would this grant represent? How will you ensure that the fiscal management is compliant with federal requirements? Who are the key staff members responsible for fiscal oversight? Detail the responsibilities of each key staff member.

Training and Technical Assistance. Describe your plans and your capacity to provide or secure needed training and technical assistance for this project.

Data Collection. Describe your plans and your capacity (current and anticipated) to implement and use self-assessments and continuous improvement systems to provide data and information on the success of the project.

4. Budget/Cost-Effectiveness

Budget and Program Design. Explain how the proposed program budget reflects the program's goals and design.

Program Sustainability. Describe how the program will work to sustain itself and its activities during the year of the grant period and beyond.

Cost Sharing Sources (Optional). Detail the amounts and sources for the proposed non-Federal cash match for the grant. Identify the amounts and sources of any other in-kind contributions to this project.

5. Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications. Read the authorization, assurances, and certifications carefully and sign and return with your application, (Section IVB, item numbers 4 and 7).

6. Performance Measurements

EAC will hold each grantee accountable for achieving the approved performance measures during the period of the grant. Performance measures must cover both year one of the performance period.

7. Budget

The budget should be sufficient to perform the tasks described in the proposal narrative for the entire grant period. Do not include amounts unexplained, miscellaneous, contingency costs, or unallowable expenses such as entertainment costs. Round all figures to the nearest dollar. Refer to the federal cost principles at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html> for information on allowable costs in federal grants.

Budget Categories are:

- a. Project Personnel Expenses
- b. Personnel Fringe Benefits
- c. Travel
- d. Equipment
- e. Supplies
- f. Contractual and Consultant Services
- g. Training
- h. Evaluation
- i. Other Support Costs
- j. Indirect Costs

C. Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on the Standard Form 424. The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com.

The website indicates a 24-hour email turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, EAC suggests registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by telephone at a cost of \$99 by calling the DUNS number request line. Applications without DUNS numbers or with invalid DUNS numbers are subject to potential rejection.

D. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for receipt of applications is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Tuesday, March 9, 2010.

Please submit an e-mail stating your *intent to apply* to mockelections@eac.gov by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time Wednesday, February 24, 2010**. This *Notice of intent* is not required, but helps us better plan the review of applications.

Your hard copy applications should be submitted via U.S. Postal Service, overnight carrier or hand delivery to the address below. Your applications must be received on the deadline by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please make sure your overnight carrier stamps the package with the date and time it was sent. Submit applications to:

U. S. Election Assistance Commission
1225 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 566-3100
E-mail: mockelections@eac.gov.

Submit three unbound, single-sided paper applications. It is important that the electronic version on disk or CD be an exact duplicate of the paper original. If there are differences between the paper application and the disk or CD, EAC will use the disk or CD version.

Alternatively, EAC will accept applications via e-mail submitted by the 5 p.m. deadline on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. The application must be time stamped by the deadline and include the entire application in one e-mail. The document must be a Microsoft Word document or in PDF format. Submit applications to mockelections@eac.gov.

Late applications: Applications received after the deadline date and time are considered late applications and, absent extreme circumstances to be determined by the Commission, will not be reviewed. EAC will notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

Extension of deadlines: EAC may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of mail service. Determinations to extend or waive deadline requirements rest with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. **If extended, the new deadline will be posted at www.eac.gov and at Grants.gov**

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

F. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable OMB Cost Principles (see 2 CFR part 220, 225 or 230; OMB Circulars A-122, A-87, A-21 (www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/)).

States must also comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments (“Common Rule,” 53 FR 8087, March 11, 1988).

V. Application Review Information

All proposals will be first submitted to a compliance review for eligibility. All applications in compliance with this *Notice* and the application instructions will be advanced for programmatic review. EAC staff will review all qualified proposals using the selection criteria described in Section II of this *Notice*. An outside peer review process may be used at EAC’s discretion, depending upon the number of applications received. During the staff review process, EAC staff may request additional supporting documentation from the applicant. EAC staff may also consider geographic representation, urban/rural composition of the applicants, and other criteria when making final funding decisions.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices

EAC anticipates announcing selections in early April 2010.

The selected applicants will be approved to work with EAC staff to clarify and finalize their application prior to the grant award. During this negotiation period, any issues or questions identified during the review of your application must be satisfactorily resolved before a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be issued. Three copies of the agreement will be sent via surface mail. An authorized official for the grant recipient will need to sign and return two copies of the agreement to the address listed in the grant award. The agreement will also include the standard terms and conditions, general terms and conditions (if any) and special award conditions (if any) that are applicable.

To obtain grant funds, grantees will be required to submit SF 270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement to EAC.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The applicable regulations and other specific conditions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also incorporates your approved application and budget as part of your binding commitments under this grant. The award recipient must comply with the following requirements:

- 1. Access for Persons with Disabilities.** All grant recipients will ensure that all training and technical assistance services and resources including web sites are accessible to persons with disabilities, as required by law.
- 2. Financial Management Systems.** Applicants selected for funding must comply with the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C.7501-07), if the applicant expended \$500,000 or more in federal awards in its most recent fiscal year. Documentation must include certification that the applicant maintains internal controls over federal awards, complies with applicable laws, regulations and contract or grant provisions, and prepares appropriate financial statements; or the most recent audit by the applicant's independent public accountant.
- 3. Use of Materials.** To ensure that materials generated with EAC funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and sub-grantees, EAC reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the agreement, including data, and to authorize others to do so. The grantee must agree to make such publications and materials available to public, as identified by the EAC, at no cost or at the cost of reproduction through the EAC's clearinghouse. All materials developed by EAC grantees must be accessible to individuals with disabilities to the extent required by law.

C. Reports and Other Requirements

1. Performance Measurement and Accountability

EAC is committed to accountability and to measuring the performance of all of its grantees. The award recipient for this competition must identify the critical outcomes of their work, indicators of success in this work, and how progress can be judged or measured. The recipient will be required to report annually on agreed upon performance measures. EAC may also require an independent assessment of grantee performance.

2. Reporting Requirements

Progress Report. Annual reports are due 30 days after the period ending December 31. The reports must include:

- Budget report for the completed budget period;
- Narrative analysis of the budget report, explaining differences between budgeted and actual activities and costs by funding source;
- Achievements as related to performance measurements;
- Discussion of any problems observed or experienced and solutions implemented.

Financial Reports. Federal Financial Report Sf-425 (FFR) must be submitted annually for the period ending September 30 by October 31. A final FFR is due 30 days after the close of the grant.

Other data collection requirements

The award recipient must:

- a) Submit copies of all curricula, handouts, and other materials developed to EAC's clearinghouse upon request.
- b) As directed, use EAC's logo for materials produced.
- c) Meet as necessary with their cognizant grants officer, or other staff or consultants designated by EAC to review work plans and budgets, monitor progress, and exchange ideas and information concerning training and technical assistance.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, contact

Mark Abbott, Director, Division of Grants
U. S. Election Assistance Commission
1225 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 566-2166
Fax: (202) 566-3127
E-mail: mockelections@eac.gov.

VIII. Other Information

Additional information about the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and its purpose can be found at www.eac.gov.

Dated: January 2010.

One technical assistance call has been scheduled to answer applicant questions about this competition as follows:

Call Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Call Time: 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Duration: 1 hr

Call-in toll-free number (US/Canada) 866-699-3239, 1-408-792-6300

Passcode: mock

Event number: 668 736 294

Leader: Mark Abbott

Webinar link: <https://eacevents.webex.com/eacevents/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=668736294>

Public Burden Statement: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the EAC to inform all potential persons who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)). This collection is approved under OMB Control #4040-0004 (Expiration Date: 01/31/2010).