



Frequently Asked Questions – Living to Serve Grants

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Living to Serve Grants provide an opportunity for FFA chapters (middle school, high school or alumni/collegiate) and state FFA associations/foundations to seek funding to support various types of service projects through a competitive application process.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the difference between community service and service-learning?

Community service is the engagement of individuals or groups in an organized activity that contributes to the local, national or world community. It is also known as volunteering which is defined as the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause, without payment, for their time and services. Potential community service projects include adopt-a-highway, canned food or clothing drive, or tutoring other students. These types of projects are funded through the Day of Service Mini-Grants.

A common misconception is that service-learning is the same as community service, but there are distinct differences. For example, service-learning occurs over the course of a semester or year, makes learning more hands-on, includes intentional and structured reflection and creates reciprocal partnerships. Service-learning projects provide a meaningful way of applying the leadership and educational skills learned in school and through FFA to meet an identified community issue. Simply put, the value of service-learning is in learning by doing. One example of a service-learning project is creating a community garden to harvest produce throughout the year to donate to local food pantries. Service-learning projects are funded through the Yearlong and Semester-Long Living to Serve Grants.

Can I use grant funds to purchase items to be donated to a local organization?

No, grant funds need to support expenses associated with classroom and service activities that move the project forward. One of the main goals of the Living to Serve grants is to engage FFA members in service and service-learning projects to develop and expand leadership skills. Using the funds for a direct monetary or in-kind donation, with little to no service or learning activities is not allowable.

I am not receiving emails from the online grant portal. What should I do?

1. Check your junk or spam folder.
2. Ensure you entered the correct email address.
3. Speak with your Information Technology staff to allow emails from the web portal through your junk/spam mail filter.

YEARLONG LIVING TO SERVE GRANT

Can I purchase materials to build or renovate a chicken coop?

Yes, constructing chicken coops or other small animal shelters are equivalent to building raised garden beds and are allowable.

My project overlaps into two focus areas, what should I do?

Projects can definitely overlap focus areas. However, for your Living to Serve grant you will need to pick one. To determine what focus area best fits your project you need to review your community need and measurable outcomes. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What community need are we trying to address? Is it too broad?
- What measurable outcomes best fit with the activities the students will be undertaking for the project?
- What set of measurable outcomes (by focus area) better align with our project?

An FFA chapter partnering with senior citizens for raised bed gardening is an example of a project that could be more than one focus area. For this example, I need to review the community need the project is addressing. If the need is food security or increased physical activity for seniors, it belongs in the Hunger, Health and Nutrition focus areas. If the need were increasing intergenerational connections, then the focus area would be Community Engagement.

How many activities need to take place to be considered yearlong?

There is not a set number of activities that need to occur. Planning, implementing and evaluating the project need to continuously occur throughout the school year. Meaning, there cannot be significant gaps (over a month or two) in these activities. This needs to be fully represented in the Service-Learning Project Description.

Community engagement seems very broad, can you provide project examples or needs to investigate?

Here are some ideas to help kick-start some brainstorming on community engagement projects.

- Investigate the needs of active military and their families in the community. The chapter could adopt military families and provide care packages for those serving and help for the families.
- Refurbish local landmarks in the community.
- Partner with local artists to create murals for the community. They could be themed, such as agriculture history or after a famous event/person from the community.
- Create an afterschool mentoring program.
- Develop an anti-bullying or safe driving campaign for the year.
- Host financial literacy classes for the community.
- Collect histories of local residents.

I cannot find a measurable outcome that matches my project?

Measurable outcomes are set based on the focus area you have selected. If you do not see one that matches your project, navigate back to the focus area question and select a new one. If none of the pre-populated outcomes match, then you can write your own. If creating your own measurable outcome, make sure to include what you will be creating or producing as a result of the project and a numerical value to show the anticipated outcome of the project.

Allowable Example: Number of trees planted: 100

Non-allowable Example: Plant trees in our neighborhood and around our school. Every student will plant a tree.