



***CONFERENCE & EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY & APPLICATION
INSTRUCTIONS**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS**

Grants Section

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR CONFERENCE & EDUCATION FUNDING

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Conference and Education Assistance Program is established and administered by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP). The purpose of this program is to provide needed financial support for conferences and seminars sponsored by Virginia-based non-profit organizations that further the education of fire and emergency services personnel throughout the Commonwealth.

FUND POLICY

A.) DEFINITIONS

Conference and Education Assistance Program – A non-mandated program administered by VDFP to provide financial assistance to Virginia-based non-profit organizations actively planning to host a conference or a symposium targeted specifically towards fire and emergency services providers and their respective agencies. Conference funds shall be used for the purposes of providing training to volunteer or career firefighting personnel and funding fire prevention and public safety education courses. The award of such monies is determined following a review of acceptable criteria and establishment of need. This program may also be referred to within this document as “*the program*” or “*supplemental financial assistance program*”. Its monies may be referred to in terms of “*financial assistance*”, “*supplemental assistance*”, or “*funds*”.

Virginia Department of Fire Programs – The state agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia responsible for the administration of the Conference and Education Assistance Program; herein also referred to as “*VDFP*”.

Fiscal Period – The twelve (12) month period in which the Commonwealth of Virginia applies its approved budget for the benefit of the state and its citizens. This cycle begins on July 1 and terminates on June 30 of each calendar year.

Grant Period – A twelve (12) month time period coinciding with the Fiscal Period in which the awarded organization (or “grantee”) must expend any funds received from the Conference and Education Assistance Program. The expenditure of funds must be for the stated purpose and be within proper guidelines for which money was awarded.

B.) PRECEDENTS OF LAW & DISCLAIMER

Disbursements from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs Conference and Education Assistance Program will be made from the Fire Programs Fund (§38.2-401 of the *Code of Virginia* as amended) consistent with the policy set forth within this document.

Nothing contained within this document shall be construed to supersede the applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Should such conflict or question arise, or appear to arise, the applicable law or regulation shall supersede and nullify any such questionable provision or province

C.) APPLICATION

Organizations intending to be considered for financial assistance from the Conference and Education Assistance Program must submit an approved application to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs postmarked by May 1 of each year.

All applications, including attachments and additional information, become the property of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and, upon determination of eligibility, become public information subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act and all other appropriate statutes.

D.) DISTRIBUTION

Award of supplemental financial assistance funds shall be made following application to and approval by VDFP. Applying organizations must demonstrate financial need and appropriately establish the benefit their conferences will have towards Virginia's fire and emergency services community.

E.) CONCEPT OF OPERATION AND FUND USE

1. To enable didactic lectures and practical learning seminars for attending Virginia fire and emergency services personnel. These seminars must reinforce currently accepted standards of training or educate fire and emergency services providers in new ideas and techniques.
2. To assist with the special needs of instructors and provide for audio-visual (i.e. multimedia) equipment and/or technical support.
3. To improve the delivery of material and overall quality of the symposium.

F.) ADMINISTRATION

The Conference and Education Assistance Program shall be administered through the Grants Section at the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

G.) ELIGIBILITY & AWARD CRITERIA

Eligibility of applicants and the award of grant funds shall be based on the following criteria:

- ❖ Only Virginia-based, legally recognized non-profit organizations representing the local, regional, or statewide interests of the Commonwealth's fire and emergency services community shall be eligible.
- ❖ Neither the applicant nor governing authority(ies) of the conference shall discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, political affiliation, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities.
- ❖ The aggregate cost of the seminar must be greater than what the applicant can reasonably afford. Inflated projections by the applicant in an attempt to induce funding may be ruled fraudulent by VDFP and be just cause for grant denial.
- ❖ The scheduled conference must be held within the legally recognized boundaries of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- ❖ Although the location of the grant-funded event must remain within the boundaries of Virginia, the host organization may allow participants from outside the Commonwealth and the United States.
- ❖ The content of the grant-funded event must be specifically targeted at the fire and emergency services community.
- ❖ All lectures and training classes offered at the symposium and paid for with grant funds must be free-of-charge to Virginia's fire and emergency services personnel. However, the host may charge admission fees to out-of-state conference participants who are not active members of a legally recognized Virginia fire and emergency services agency. In addition, charges are permitted for attendance at non-learning activities such as meals, banquets, dances, trade exhibitions, etc.

H.) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AMOUNT

The Executive Director of VDFP shall determine the amount of any financial award as funds are available. The non-availability of funds may prevent the approval of any application for supplemental grant assistance.

I.) DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

VDFP shall reserve the right to determine the method and amount of financial assistance disbursement on a case-by-case basis. Examples of acceptable methods include electronic transfer and check writing. Disbursement of funds shall be made only with the approval of the Executive Director of VDFP.

J.) FUND USE

As indicated in Sections A & D, monies from the Conference and Education Assistance Program shall be used to provide for acceptable didactic and practical instruction to Virginia's fire and emergency services personnel. In so doing, funds may be applied towards instructor fees, honorariums, renting multimedia supplies and equipment, the production of presentation materials, technical assistance, "special needs" of the instructors/presenters (to be decided on a case-by-case basis by the VDFP Executive Director), and expenses related to the coach-class travel of instructors.

The use of money towards non-learning or recreational activities is expressly prohibited. Such activities include, but are not limited to, the following: meals, breaks, food and beverage supplies, social functions, entertainment expenses, etc.

K.) FUND MISUSE

Should any audit reveal inappropriate or questionable expenditures, the financial assistance recipient shall submit written explanation to the Executive Director of VDFP within fifteen (15) days of notification and be subject to an investigation of improper use. Any organization believed to have provided false, misleading, or improper information will be subject to a review by VDFP and possibly other authorities. The Office of the Attorney General will be consulted regarding these matters as is necessary.

If any financial assistance recipient is deemed to have misused any monies, in whole or in part, of the Conference and Education Assistance Program, such funds shall be re-paid to VDFP within 30 days from the date of determination of misuse. Said organization shall then be ineligible to receive VDFP supplemental financial assistance for a period of up to five (5) years from the date of the original award. The deliberate and/or malicious misuse of monies from the Conference and Education Assistance Program will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority(ies) for review.

L.) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY RECIPIENT

As a condition of the financial assistance award, the grant recipient or host organization shall publicly acknowledge the services of VDFP during the scheduled conference and any other activity supported by VDFP's financial assistance program(s).

M.) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the conference, the financial assistance recipient shall submit a written report to the Executive Director of VDFP summarizing the benefits and challenges of the seminar. The awardee may also use this occasion to comment on the administration of the Conference and Education Assistance Program. All written remarks shall be used by VDFP for quality assurance and quality improvement purposes.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION # -- To be assigned by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs following receipt of the application.

DATE – Date the application is completed.

ORGANIZATION NAME – Official name of the non-profit organization completing the application and sponsoring or co-sponsoring the event.

MAILING ADDRESS – Postal address of the applicant.

E-MAIL ADDRESS – The applicant's e-mail address.

AUTHORIZED AGENT/ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACT – Indicate the name and formal title of the Grant Coordinator for the applying organization. Include proper telephone numbers.

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION – In a one or two sentence statement, briefly state the purpose of your non-profit organization. You may cite your organization's mission statement.

TITLE, LOCATION, AND PROJECTED DATES – VDFP requires the name of the conference, the location it will be held, and its start and completion dates.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE? – Describe the purpose of the conference and indicate what it intends to accomplish (i.e. "Provide a weekend forum of required continuing education...", "Certify attending fire and emergency services providers as [title]...", etc.).

WHO IS THE INTENDED AUDIENCE? – Identify the target audience for the seminar and their expected level of certifications (i.e. "Virginia's volunteer and career fire services personnel trained at a minimum to the level of..."). Conferences that attract a broad scope of emergency services providers, from novices to experts in their field, are encouraged.

PLEASE INDICATE WHAT LECTURES/TRAINING SEMINARS – List the official titles of all tentatively scheduled session topics and the estimated number of conference attendees each one hopes to attract. Continue on another sheet if necessary.

ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF EACH SEMINAR – Answer all of the following questions for EACH session to be presented at the conference. Secure the answers to the application.

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WHAT IS THE PLANNED APPROACH TO TOPIC COVERAGE? – Describe any unique or different approach to the explanation of each training session to be presented (i.e. role play, case studies, interactive multimedia, etc.).

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE INSTRUCTORS? – Indicate any special requirements (equipment, lights, props, personnel, etc.) of the instructors that will result in additional expense for the host organization(s).

IS THERE A NEED FOR AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT? – If television, slide, sound, or multimedia equipment is necessary, please describe what type of equipment and for which particular sessions it will be applied.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES – Oftentimes fire and emergency symposiums are sponsored or assisted by more than one agency. Indicate if such is the case with your event and if so, how much money will be contributed by each organization. Include requests to organizations, which were subsequently denied. Continue on another sheet if necessary.

IF THIS REQUEST FOR FUNDING IS DENIED – Every application for financial assistance requires that the applicant justify the need for funding. If your organization believes that without VDFP supplemental aid your seminar cannot be held, you must explain why that is the case.

ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION OF REQUEST – Your organization is welcome to present any additional information it believes might benefit the request for financial assistance.

ESTIMATED EXPENSES & REQUESTED FUNDING – Identify estimated aggregate expenses by line item under the heading “Est. Total Cost”. Indicate the amount of assistance your organization requests from VDFP in the column marked “VDFP Grant Request”. If matching funds from other sources will be applied to your conference, indicate the amount and for what purpose they will be applied to under the heading marked “Matching Funds”. Total the estimated dollar amounts in the appropriate boxes.

PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE – The individual completing the application must verify that the submitted document and all relevant information is true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge by supplying his/her full name, signature, and the date that it was signed.

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***Please review this application and all attached information
for accuracy prior to submission.***

**RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS
POSTMARKED BY MAY 1 OF EACH YEAR.**

Grants Section
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1005 Technology Park Drive
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Tel: 804/371-0220
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