

How to Prepare a Winning Handshake Application

APPL Conference

March 9, 2012



Little Rock



Philpott Lake

Handshake Partnership Program Time Line

- Applications Period Begins July
- Application Deadline Oct

- Recipients Announced Dec
- Agreement Deadline Aug
- Expend Funds 2 yrs
 - ▶ Funds transmitted to District/Project via MIPR or FAD



Handshake Partnership Program

Start NOW

- **Determine your project**
- **Work with prospective partners**
- **Identify needs and each partner's contribution**
- **Is the Handshake Program the right fit?**



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The most important thing to remember when completing a Handshake Application is to
READ and FOLLOW
the Application Instructions.



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Applications

“Description: Describe the partnership and the work to be accomplished. The description should be no longer than three pages. Include the basic who, what, when, where, how. Outline concisely the tasks needed to complete the project and who will accomplish them, e.g., new facilities, renovations made, research reports, type of visitor services, cultural or natural resources preserved, educational or interpretive products created, etc.”



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Applications

A good application includes a description about

- the partners,
- the project, and
- the overall benefit of the partnership



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“Address any of the three incentive categories checked and explain how the project will meet the following six evaluation criteria (**each evaluation criteria should be addressed in a separate paragraph**):”

- **Sustainability**
- **Partnership Value**
- **Recreational Benefit**
- **Environmental Stewardship Value**
- **Communication and Education Value**
- **Innovativeness**



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1. Traditional Challenge Partnerships Projects

versus

2. Stand alone (SCA) Intern/Crew

Projects that can show benefits in multiple categories compete better.



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Sustainability - What is the life span of the product and the benefit to the Corps?

- What is long term benefit of the project?
- How long will it be around?
- What is long term cost?
- Will there be on-going maintenance required?
- By whom?
- Will the project be removed or closed if maintenance is required but not funded?
- Longer term benefit and less O&M compete better



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Sustainability examples

Properly constructed the project should easily last for 15 years.

This shelter would serve the community and visitors for decades to come

The materials were chosen for the project to ensure a long lasting, low maintenance fence.

This design is of benefit to the Corps of Engineers as it will require very little on-going maintenance and will last at least 30 years.

The group day use area including the group fire ring, bbq grill, picnic area and corrals will last over thirty years without extensive maintenance. The shelter for example has 30 year shingles.



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b. Partnership Value - What is the significance of the partner's contribution to the project (e.g. matching dollars, materials, in-kind services, etc.)?

- This category mostly comes down to the partner's contribution...the dollars and cents.
- More partners compete better because there is more potential contribution
- The more benefit the COE receives with less cost makes the application more attractive.
- A project with a 50/50 split in cost scores half of the available points
- **Higher % of partner contribution compete better**



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Partnership Value Examples

Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields:

	Local Corps Office	Handshake Funds	SCA	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	Total
In-Kind Services	\$5,000	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$18,500
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$10,000	\$25,000	N/A	\$1,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$41,500
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
Funds Contributed	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$4,272	\$4,272	\$1,282	\$1,068	\$0	\$5,126	\$2,777	\$6,408	\$25,205
SCA Intern/Crew	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$5,272	\$4,272	\$6,282	\$20,068	\$4,500	\$5,126	\$8,277	\$6,408	\$100,205
Share of Total Cost	15%	25%	0%	5%	4%	6%	20%	4%	5%	8%#	6%	100.0%

Up to this point, partners have contributed over \$300,000 in volunteer service, in-kind gifts and property.

Overall, the Multi-User Trail Partners have committed over \$60,000 in materials, volunteer labor, equipment use and in kind-services.

The 3 partners for this project will be completing 95% of the physical labor for the project and also providing almost half of the materials.



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Environmental Stewardship Value - Does the project contribute to the physical improvement of the environment?

Topics that usually score well in this category:

- Invasive species control
- Aquatic & fisheries habitat improvements
- Wildlife habitat improvements
- Trails
- Improvements to the environment compete better



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Environmental Stewardship Examples

This project will greatly contribute to the physical improvement of the environment by...

It is important to work proactively to keep additional invasive species from entering the lake and to prevent further spread of existing invasive species.

Restoring the shoreline and littoral zone of the reservoir establishes structures in the lake which will support a wide array of habitat for aquatic organisms.

With the slow steady long-term decline in water quality the implementation of this project will help with shoreline erosion, decrease runoff and will slow the eutrophication process.



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Recreational Benefit - Does the project improve the recreational experience for multiple user types?

- What experiences are created?
- Who benefits?
- Are there multiple user groups?



•The more diverse and multi-functioning the recreation experience can be, the better the application should score.



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Recreational Benefit Examples:

Even though low stream flows during non release times or drought conditions would prohibit or limit kayaking and canoeing, these access points would still be heavily used by anglers and picnickers wanting to participate in stream activities.

Nature viewing, plant/tree identification and hiking are also additional recreation activities that will be enhanced...

The group day use area would be available to multiple user types including hikers, backpackers, cyclists, equestrians, and boaters..

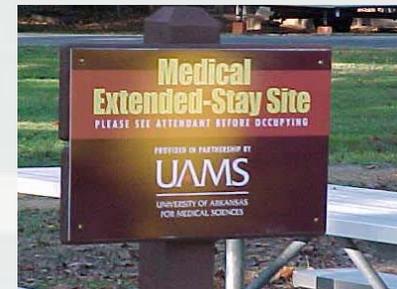
This is an unique recreation area that provides ample recreational opportunities such as orienteering, geocaching, paddling, hiking, bird watching, photography, camping and snowshoeing. The primary users will be paddlers, nature enthusiasts and youth groups..



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Communication and Education Value - Does the project increase public understanding of the Corps and its missions through interpretation, outreach, education and public information?

- It is important to show how the COE missions will be distributed or promoted.
- Interactive?
- Static handouts?
- Explain how the benefits of the project are conveyed to the public and how does that improve the COE image.



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Communication and Education Examples:

Through the Cooperative Agreement the fundamentals of environmental education are highlighted and have produced educational material for the sustainable development and construction of trails.

The shelter would serve as an outdoor class room by local schools and other resource agencies for presentations on environmental stewardship, navigation, public recreation, and water safety. The location is also ideal for presentations on the cultural history of the area.

It will be a site for interpretive programming involving paddling, water safety, exploring, birding and others...

...by promoting safety and knowledge on water related activities available around our lakes.



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Innovativeness: Describe the innovative nature of the partnership or the end result. Are other organizations doing this kind of project? How is this project important and unique?

- What makes this idea so different?
- Why is it special?
- Is the partnership innovative or is it the project?

Explain the difference if there is one.

•Convince the reader, “Wow, that is certainly a new way to do it.”



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Innovativeness Examples

To our knowledge, this trail would be the first of its kind, innovative in that it provides a new concept of community based recreation and fitness while providing environmental stewardship during the activity.

This project will set an attractive precedent for further shoreline renovations and will be a model for Lake Association Members, neighbors, and visitors.

It is unique in that it brings together several natural and innovative measures...

This project will provide conceptual to visual progression in educating the public on the environmental concept of erosion control..



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Application suggestions:

Don't assume the reader knows what you know.

When the application says, "each evaluation criteria should be addressed in a separate paragraph," make sure each evaluation criteria should be addressed in a separate paragraph.

Provide the information in an easy to read, easy to find format.



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Scoring:

Each application is evaluated and scored 1-5 for each criteria, then weighted.

- Sustainability (20%)
- Partnership Value (20%)
- Recreational Benefit (15%)
- Environmental Stewardship Value (15%)
- Communication and Education Value (15%)
- Innovativeness (15%)

Maximum score for each application is 200 points per evaluator.



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Scoring:

Each PAC member evaluates all applications and submits scores to coordinator.

Scores are combined to get total score.

Bonus points are added...



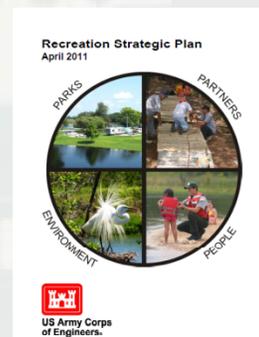
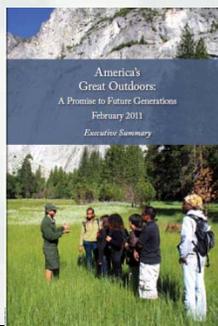
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Bonus Points categories for FY 12 were:

1. Veterans and/or military family organizations
2. Supports America's Great Outdoors (AGO)
3. Supports National Recreation Strategic Plan

Applications gained 10 points for each category if they qualified.



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Challenge Partnership that includes a partner (Friends Group/Cooperating Association) that has recently signed a Cooperative Agreement with Project/District can compete for an additional \$5,000

Has NO BEARING on evaluation score

Does have a bearing on the funds disbursement.



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Scoring:

Projects are ranked in the order of total score.

Funds are disbursed according to ranking and amount requested.

Its possible the lowest ranked funded project will not receive all of requested funds.



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Manage Expectations

- In 2012 there were:
 - 36 applications submitted
 - 13 selected to receive funds



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- Start NOW
- Determine your project
- Work with prospective partners
- Identify needs and each partner's contribution
- Is the Handshake Program the right fit?



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- Upcoming Handshake Webinars
 - ▶ July and September
 - ▶ Watch for the dates.

- **GOOD LUCK!**

