

LIKELY ASKED QUESTIONS (LAQs)

ENHANCED VOLUNTEER MANAGER FUNDING SCHEME

SSA Eligibility

- 1) Are SSAs which already have a dedicated volunteer manager eligible to apply for Enhanced VMFS?**

Ans: Yes. SSAs can use the Enhanced VMFS to employ the first dedicated volunteer manager, or as new addition to expand the volunteer management team to further advance their capacity and capability in strategic management and mobilisation of volunteer resources. However, the existing dedicated volunteer manager in the SSAs would not be covered under Enhanced VMFS.

- 2) Are SSAs which were involved in the Pilot Scheme eligible to apply for Enhanced VMFS?**

Ans: Yes. However, these agencies will need to further increase their volunteer management capacity and capability.

- 3) Are SSAs which have been appointed by MCCY as Volunteer Centres eligible to apply for Enhanced VMFS?**

Ans: Volunteer Centres which are SSAs and NCSS members are eligible to apply for Enhanced VMFS. However, the funded headcount under Enhanced VMFS cannot be the same headcount under MCCY Volunteer Centre funding agreement.

These SSAs are expected to achieve the targets set on top and above the current KPIs, including those targets which would be set under Enhanced VMFS.

Dedicated Volunteer Manager / PME Funded under Enhanced VMFS

- 4) Must the role be at a managerial level? Can SSA use the Enhanced VMFS to fund a lower position?**

Ans: The headcount salary under Enhanced VMFS is pegged at a Grade III Manager/Executive and that is a managerial level. The new hire should possess the relevant skills, competencies and traits to strategise volunteer management and help the SSA to achieve the targets set under Enhanced VMFS.

- 5) Can Enhanced VMFS be used to fund existing staff of SSAs e.g. existing Volunteer Managers or promotion of Volunteer Executive to Volunteer Manager or conversion of Programme Manager to Volunteer Manager?**

Ans: No. Enhanced VMFS can only be used to fund new dedicated VM, who is a Professional, Manager and Executive (PME) from outside the social service sector (*Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident*).

The individual should be appointed to the VM role by the SSA after the launch of the Enhanced VMFS (19 August 2020). Any funding support via the Scheme will only

commence upon the award of the scheme to SSA (earliest commencement on 1 Nov 2020). Upon the award of the Scheme and the appointment of the individual, SSAs must submit the CV of the new hire to NCSS.

6) What is the value add of having a Volunteer Manager who is a PME from outside the social service sector?

Ans: The SSG Skills Framework for Social Service and VMFS pilot study report showed that most technical skills, competencies and traits of a successful volunteer manager are transferable from other job positions. PMEs from outside the sector with relevant skills (e.g. collaborative practices and diversity management) and traits (e.g. strategic thinker) can thus value add by increasing the standard of volunteer management in SSAs with their ability to plan and implement strategies. They would also bring fresh perspectives and best practices on people management to the social service sector.

7) What is the definition of “PME from outside the social service sector”?

The current/latest employer of the individual must not be a NCSS member agency.

8) Must the PME from outside the social service sector be currently unemployed?

Ans: No. The PME just needs to be newly recruited from outside the sector and keen to join social service.

9) If a PME is currently working in the private/public sector but has previous working experience in the social service sector, can he be employed under Enhanced VMFS?

Ans: Yes. Individuals who are keen to return to the social service sector can be employed under Enhanced VMFS. The duration of employment at the private/public sector should be at least 1 year.

10) If a SSA is unable to find a suitable PME from outside the social service sector, can existing staff be converted to take on the role of VM?

Ans: Conversion of existing staff is unfortunately not allowed under Enhanced VMFS. If an SSA is late in recruitment and misses the 3rd funding period of 1 Jan 2021 to 31 Dec 2022, it enjoys less than 24 months of funding.

Example: If a suitable PME is appointed from 1 Feb 21 onwards, SSAs will enjoy 23 months of funding.

The latest appointment of suitable PME is by 1 April 21. SSAs will enjoy 21 months of funding. If a suitable PME is not appointed by then, NCSS reserves the right to remove the SSA from the scheme.

11) Must the new hire employed under Enhanced VMFS be placed on permanent employment with the SSA? Can the new hire be placed on contract employment?

Ans: Enhanced VMFS is a 2-year funding scheme. Thereafter, SSAs are expected to self-fund or consider other sources of funding (e.g. Community Capability Trust). SSAs can decide which type of employment (contract or full-time) is the most suitable for its current manpower needs.

12) Can Enhanced VMFS fund SSA with 2 VM headcounts?

Ans: Depending on the targets and forward plans set by the SSA, Enhanced VMFS can fund up to 2 VM headcounts per SSA. However, SSAs are expected to achieve the targets set under VMFS.

Funding Support

13) Is there a cap on the headcount salary funding?

Ans: In Year 1, NCSS will fund 90% of the salary of the VM up to \$86,550, including salary, bonuses and CPF. In Year 2, NCSS will fund 60% of the salary of the VM, up to \$60,000. In each year, funding will be based on the co-funded portion of the actual salary, or the cap, whichever is lower. SSAs are encouraged to follow the NCSS FY20 Salary Guidelines.

14) For the training cost, what kind of training is included?

Ans: NCSS will support SSAs during the onboarding process. Fees for the onboarding process will be paid using the training cost provided.

Upon the award of the scheme, NCSS will provide a list of recommended courses at Social Service Institute. These courses are pre-approved and deemed relevant for the role of VMs. SSAs are highly encouraged to send the newly hired VMs to these courses. For other courses, the management of SSAs must endorse the relevance of the training to the VM role and submit the course description to NCSS for concurrence. Upon completion of the course, SSA must submit the training completion certificate and invoice to NCSS for purpose of reimbursement.

15) What are the eligible criteria to award the newly hired VM with the retention bonus?

Ans: The newly hired VM must have completed 2 years of full-time employment (excluding any no-pay leave) under Enhanced VMFS funding period. SSA can provide the retention bonus if the performance of the VM is deemed at least satisfactory in helping the SSA achieve the targets set under Enhanced VMFS. If the SSA does not provide the retention bonus, an explanation must be provided to NCSS.

16) How will the funding be disbursed to SSAs? What kind of documentation do we need to provide?

Ans: Funds for headcount salary will be disbursed upfront on a half-year basis and checks on fund utilisation and KPI targets will be made before the next disbursement. Funds for training and retention bonus will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Any unused amount will be returned to NCSS at the end of each year.

If KPI targets are not met, NCSS's approval for a proposed remedial plan would have to be sought. NCSS reserves the rights to reduce the funding quantum or recover the funding provided, should an agency fail to meet the targets after an agreed time period.

Additional Support from NCSS

17) Is the onboarding of dedicated VM (PME from outside the social service sector) mandatory?

Ans: To facilitate the onboarding of the newly hired VM, NCSS has identified the core modules/training workshops to assimilate the individual to the social service sector and the VM role. It is mandatory for the individual to go through the onboarding process.

| Onboarding | To be completed |
|--|---|
| Understanding Singapore's Social Services - Singapore's Social Compact | Within 30 days of staff appointment |
| Briefing session on VMFS for newly hired VMs and their direct reporting officers | Within 3 months of staff appointment |
| Understanding Social Service Sector | Date to be advised by NCSS. A 2-day programme would be shared subsequently. |
| Volunteer Management Practices: Connect, Engage, Develop | Within 6 months of staff appointment |

Sun Ray Scheme

18) What is Sun Ray Scheme?

Ans: In March 2014 COS, Minister Chan Chun Sing announced that NCSS will start the Sun Ray scheme, to centrally recruit, develop and deploy professionals to the various agencies in the Social Service Sector. This scheme aims to attract and groom a community of leaders who can lead professional practices and SSAs. More information can be found on <https://www.ncss.gov.sg/Social-Service-Careers/Sun-Ray>

19) How can the Sun Ray scheme help the SSAs?

Ans: The Sun Ray scheme:

- supplements and complements agencies' efforts in recruitment and talent management.
- attracts a more diverse range of candidates through a differentiated employment and development model.
- provides salary subsidies and fully funds Sun Ray staff's training programmes.
- allows SSAs to access and leverage on the wider Sun Ray community for knowledge and collaboration.

20) What are secondment fees?

Ans: NCSS pays for the Sun Ray staff's salaries, bonuses, Employer CPF, training and benefits. In turn, NCSS charges the agencies a secondment fee at a subsidised rate. The secondment fee is typically about 70-80% of the total manpower costs to NCSS. Secondment fees are reviewed annually in July. SSAs can expect a 3-5% increase in fee annually.

21) Who pays for Sun Ray staff trainings and claims?

Ans: NCSS fully funds the required training, subject to approval from the SSAs and NCSS. Sun Ray staff will make claims (e.g. Medical and Dental) directly to NCSS. Agencies can reimburse transport and mobile phone expenses to Sun Ray staff directly.

22) How many partner agencies does Sun Ray scheme have on board?

Ans: There are 66 agencies on board the Sun Ray scheme. 45 of these agencies have active Sun Ray deployed to them. These include Community Psychology Hub, Care Corner, MINDS, Rainbow Centre, SPD, AWWA, AMKFSC, TOUCH, and Montfort Care to name a few.

23) What funding components are excluded from Enhanced VMFS if SSA leverages on the Sun Ray scheme to hire a PME from outside the social service sector to take on the VM role?

Ans: The Sun Ray Scheme will absorb the full training costs and provide Gratuity Bonus payment to Sun Ray staff on the 4th year of service.

As such, Enhanced VMFS will only co-fund the headcount salary, which is the secondment fee charged under Sun Ray Scheme, capped at \$86,550 in Year 1 and \$60,000 in Year 2.

24) There will be engagement sessions under the Sun Ray Scheme and Enhanced VMFS. Wouldn't that take up too much time of the newly hired VM?

Ans: Attendance of these sessions are highly encouraged and based on availability of staff.

Mandatory Sun Ray Events/Trainings that Sun Ray staff need to attend:

| Courses/Events | Date |
|---|---|
| Understanding the Social Service Sector (USSS)* | Within the 3 months from their start date |
| Dialogue session with CEO/NCSS* | Within the 3 months from their start date |
| Milestone/Capstone Programme | After Sun Ray staff have passed probation |
| Sun Ray Appreciation Lunch | Every July |
| Sun Ray Day | Every November |

*One-off programme

25) There will be mandatory orientation under both Sun Ray Scheme and Enhanced VMFS. Wouldn't that take up too much time of the newly hired VM? What if the orientation date clashes?

Ans: NCSS will deconflict the orientation dates of the two schemes. Separately, the Sun Ray Team will engage the SSA to align expectations of the Sun Ray staff and to orientate the SSA on administrative matters.

Any Other Business

26) Should we miss this round, when would be the next available round to participate?

Ans: NCSS will target funding an initial group of up to 50 VMS in SSAs which meet the selection criteria. We will evaluate the demand for the scheme and consider extending it to more SSAs (if necessary). **SSAs can also explore other NCSS resources [here](#).**

27) What happens after 2 years?

Ans: Under the VMFS pilot scheme, 9 out of 10 SSAs retained the volunteer management role beyond the 2-year funded period, and subsequently funded the VMs on their own. A similar trend is expected in the enhanced scheme. SSAs are highly encouraged to retain the VM role and staff beyond the 2-year funding period to strategically manage volunteer resources. SSAs may consider tapping on other sources of funding (e.g. Community Capability Trust) should they require more support.