

VETERAN'S DAY 2008 FUNDING CRITERIA GUIDANCE NOTES

1. This document is intended as a guide to help you prepare your application for MOD Veterans Day funding so that it meets the eligibility criteria. It contains comments and guidance on how to achieve the difficult task of clearly conveying the Veteran's Day messages. These notes are not exclusive and should not be regarded as the only ways in which to meet the eligibility criteria.

Veteran's Contributions Past and Present

2. We are seeking evidence that your event shows that veterans not only contribute a great deal to the Country during their Service lives but also continue to contribute to their communities after their discharge from the military.

- To identify examples of veterans past contributions you might consider the following local resources:
 - Local history
 - Local Military ties / Bases
 - Associations
 - Photos
 - Articles

- To identify what veterans currently contribute to the community the following bodies could be consulted:
 - Internal Council networks / community sources
 - Ex-Service organizations
 - Round Tables
 - Local Papers (advertisements - request veterans come forward)

- It is also worth bearing in mind that today's In-Service personnel, Reserves and Cadets are tomorrow's veterans and should also feature in Veterans Day events.

- Some examples of ways to demonstrate veterans contributions past and present are as follows:
 - Conduct an HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge presentation. In order to give the presentation a suitable sense of occasion the involvement of your local MP or Mayor is strongly advocated as this should draw in extra support for your event. During the presentation use the range of recipients to demonstrate the diversity of the veteran's community by selecting a range of veterans by age, gender, service and ethnicity.
 - Involve your local military unit or recruitment team to improve the range of assets at your disposal. This is a great way of showing the serving military community making a contribution.
 - Identify and engage your characters like those on the MOD Veterans Day DVD, "Can you recognise a Veteran?".
 - Invite representatives from individual veterans' groups **to explain their role in the community.**

- Invite / use veterans who are now teachers or emergency services personnel as many ex-Service personnel gravitate to these professions.
- Put on displays or demonstrations that emphasise the transfer of military skills to civilian professions such as:
 - Chefs - live cookery demonstrations
 - Musicians – provide live music
 - Paramedics / Nurses – first aid demonstrations
 - Firefighters – appliance demonstrations, hose run competitions
- Programme veterans / youth interaction (this needs a structure and should not take the form of chance encounters as these rarely work).
- Before and after photos, stories and exhibitions that display veteran's lives in Service and civilian life.

The bottom line is that you are looking to provide a stimulating interactive event that puts emphasis on the transfer of skills from military to civilian life.

Support for Veterans

3. Most veterans make a successful transition from service to civilian life. For a wide range of reasons a small minority do not. There are many support organizations and networks available to help those veterans in need. These organisations offer support such as financial assistance, advice on employment, homelessness, support with disabilities and counselling. One of the aims of Veterans Day is to highlight the work carried out by these organisations in order to raise awareness, of both veterans and public alike, of the support available. Examples of this support are as follows:

- National
 - Service Personnel and Veterans Agency Help Line
 - Service Personnel and Veterans Agency website
 - Press and media adverts
- Local
 - Local links between Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA), local organisations and charities. Some limited signposting of local bodies can be offered as a result of previous reaching out conferences held in Newcastle, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Portsmouth (Mar 07) by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.
- The most important thing to consider is how best to convey this at your event and some suggestions are given below:
 - Invite SPVA caravan (rare asset)
 - Invite local and SPVA Welfare Service representatives

- Utilise WIFI laptop computers logged onto the SPVA website <http://www.veterans-uk.info> (inviting children to demonstrate the website to Veterans is an ideal way of providing interaction). Laptop computers could be requested from your local tech/business colleges or businesses themselves.

Diversity of Veterans

4. The veteran's community is highly diverse, Veterans Day activities must endeavour to display this diversity. Areas to consider when planning Veterans Day events are as follows:

- All Services
 - Royal Navy
 - Army
 - Royal Air Force
 - Reserve Forces
 - Merchant Seafarers who served in a vessel at a time when it was operated to facilitate military operations by HM Armed Forces
- All Ages
- Both Sexes
- All Roles
 - Combat
 - Peace keeping / enforcement
 - Disaster relief
 - Community Support
- All Ethnicities, for example
 - West Indian Ex Serviceman's Association (WIESA)
 - Undivided Indian Association
 - Foreign and Commonwealth

5. To reinforce the diversity message it is recommended that you convey the international support and contribution made to UK military operations by, for example, the Ghurkhas, United States, Polish, Canadian, French forces etc. Some suggestions for promoting this message to your audience are given below:

- Use Service personnel assets
- Show part 1 of MOD Veterans Day DVD, "Can you recognise a Veteran?" at your event
- Employ a wide range of veterans on stands
- Schedule specific events within your day for all veterans' age groups i.e. Bosnia, Falklands Afghanistan Iraq etc
- Utilize the "We Were There Exhibition" assets; see www.wewerethere.mod.uk or contact:

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Inter-generational Dialogue

6. If the veterans' message is to be self-sustaining the country's youth must be engaged and convinced of the importance and relevance of the veterans' contribution. To that end it is vital that events are attractive to the younger members of the community and that they contain structured activities that ensure interaction between school children and veterans. Some examples of ways in which to do this are:

- Consider interactive youth displays that draw on the specialist capabilities and expertise of charities such as St Dunstan's (for blind ex-Service personnel) / British Limbless Ex Serviceman's Association (BLESMA)
- Appeal to youth through material aimed at 10 year olds
- Clearly identify veterans (e.g. give them large badges).
- Tailor proactive events, not chance encounters, between children and veterans such as competitions and activities that involve youth and veterans working together to achieve a common goal
- Conduct guided tours of displays for children by veterans
- Include presentations and personal stories by veteran's to organised audiences
- Hire a Medal making machine (such as those found at Fairs)
- Devise a Quiz, the answers to which can be found on the event Stands
- Run a "treasure hunt" - find a logo, or similar, hidden on Stands / the site
- Employ re-enactors (scale at your discretion) to depict notable military events
- Hire a climbing wall (some military recruiting organisations can provide them free of charge)
- Use technology (Webcams, interviews, Blogs etc)
- Create a page on Council website and establish a two way link with the Veterans Day website at <http://www.veterans-uk.mod.uk/veteransday/index.htm>

Summary

7. It should be remembered that this document is only intended to offer guidance and some examples of ways in which to meet the Veterans Day funding criteria. The notes are drawn from experiences and practices observed from other Veterans Day events and are neither exclusive nor compulsory. Originality and innovation are highly desirable as they fuel inspiration for other event organisers and ensure that Veterans Day continues to evolve and grasp the public imagination. Good luck with planning your event.